Hafa Adai!

Masks required at all CPA ports. PAGE 6

USCG joins search for missing mariner off Guam. PAGE 7

75¢

Saipan Tribune

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DOL ready for Round 2 of PUA

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI Department of Labor is ready for the second round of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation programs, according to Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente yesterday.

See DOL on Page 4

'Firming up NMI's regulatory functions will avoid inclusion in China's blacklist'

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Strengthening the Commonwealth Casino Commission's regulatory functions will help prevent China from including the CNMI in its "blacklist" of cross-border gambling tourism destinations, according to CCC executive director Andrew Yeom.

See FIRMING on Page 4

IPI to remove one of its cranes

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has been allowed to remove one of the cranes at its Garapan worksite

See IPI on Page 4

MCS names top teacher, support staff

As part of its participation in the national celebration of Catholic Schools Week this week, Mount Carmel School named Francis San Nicolas as its 2020-2021 Teacher of the Year, Catherine Tamandong as its Support Staff of the Year, and Deacon Rosiky Camacho as first-runner up for its Teacher of the Year award.

The school announced its selection of the three honorees last Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, as MCS was continuing its celebration of Catholic Schools Week with the theme, "Celebrating Our Faculty and Staff."

This year's Teacher of the Year, "Coach" San Nicolas, has been employed at MCS for nine years but served in the Public School System for nine years before working at MCS, where he serves as the primary instructor for all physical education courses and coaches many of the athletic programs at the school, including

See MCS on Page 4

Francis San Nicolas, third from left, is Mount Carmel School's 2020-2021 Teacher of the Year. In the photo with him are school principal Frances Taimanao, first from left, vice principal Bobby Baldazo, second from left, and school president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, fourth from left.
MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL

Catherine Tamondong, third from left, is awarded Mount Carmel School's 2020-2021 Support Staff of the Year on Feb. 2, 2021, during the school's celebration of Catholic Schools Week.
MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL

Rosiky Camacho, second from left, is awarded Mount Carmel School's 2020-2021 First-Runner up for Teacher of the Year on Feb. 2, 2021, during Mount Carmel School's celebration of Catholic Schools Week .
MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 7pm, Feb. 3, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,610	8	7,618
Recovered	7,381	26	7,407
Active	74	8	82
Deaths	129	0	129
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			116,483

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	133	0	133
Traced via Travel Screening	107	0	107
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			168

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

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The Consular Office of Japan presents Perry P. Tenorio with the Japanese commendation.
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ENVIRONMENT
Express your love for the environment or have an eco-conscious date this Valentine's Day.
PAGE 14

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

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Local

Tenorio presented with Japan's Foreign Minister Commendation

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Perry P. Tenorio, a former managing director of the Marianas Visitors Authority, was presented yesterday with the Foreign Minister Commendation by the Consular Office of Japan on Saipan, making him the first local resident to receive this award in the past five years.

Japanese consul Ono Kazuhiko, who presented Tenorio with the award yesterday at the Aqua Resort Club, said that Tenorio is among 152 individuals and 54 groups who were presented this award this year around the world.

In a later interview Tenorio said he is grateful and honored to have received this award and acknowledged the countless individuals, companies, and organizations who have shaped the relationship between Japan and the CNMI.

"There are countless individuals, companies, and organizations both locally and abroad, past and present, that have continued to promote the bonds of friendship, as well as mutual understanding, between our islands and Japan," said Tenorio.

Tenorio said the people before him who helped mold the strong relationship between Japan and the CNMI is a reflection of the people of the CNMI. "It's not just about me. Through consul Ono, this is a reflection on the people of the CNMI, or the travel industry in general, promoting goodwill and friendship between the CNMI and Japan," he said.

Kazuhiko stated that Tenorio has participated in many of the memorial services that were held by various organizations from Japan, while also contributing to enhance the CNMI's goodwill with Japan.

"As everyone may be aware, Mr. Tenorio established and organized the 'Taste of the Marianas,' which has become an annual signature event on Saipan. This event is not only about Japanese cuisine but it's also an event that shares the culture of Japan in a form of the Awaodori [dance group] and Kendo [martial arts]," said Kazuhiko.

Perry John Pangelinan Tenorio, sixth from left, is presented with the Foreign Minister Commendation Award by Japanese consul Kazuhiko Ono, third from right, yesterday at the Aqua Resort Club Kevin's the Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant. They are joined in this photo by Tenorio's family members and some Japanese Consulate staff.

NEIL FAMA

It was Tenorio's 13 years of service as MVA director and his achievements in those 13 years that enabled his selection for this commendation, Kazuhiko added.

According to him, Japan's Foreign Ministry selects the recipients every year and conducts an awarding ceremony in July. However, due to COVID-19, the announcement was delayed to Dec. 1, 2020. Tenorio didn't receive the award until yesterday.

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'Recycled' bill wants to penalize 'revenge porn'

Rep. Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan) has pre-filed a bill that will create penalties in the CNMI for the unauthorized disclosure of intimate sexual images—more commonly referred to as "revenge porn."

Guerrero's H.B. 22-1, which is the first legislation filed in the 22nd House of the Representatives, is the updated version of of H.B. 21-107 that then-representative Janet U. Maratita first offered in February 2020. At that time, the House passed Maratita's bill but the Senate did not act on it.

Guerrero

In H.B. 22-1, Guerrero said nonconsensual exposure of intimate images and sexual extortion are becoming common experiences for too many people and that advances in technology have transformed and expanded the ways in which sexual violence can be perpetrated. He said the dissemination of sexually explicit images of others without their permission, sometimes called "nonconsensual pornography," often involves situations where the individual consented to the photo or videos but expected they would be kept private. In other cases, images may have been taken surreptitiously and then shared.

In July 2018, the Uniform Law Commission approved the Uniform Civil Remedies for Unauthorized Disclosure of Intimate Images Act. Guerrero said that law provides a "uniform, clear, fair, and constitutionally sound definition of this harmful conduct and remedies for the harm it causes."

Under Guerrero's bill, a winning plaintiff may recover damages caused by the defendant's disclosure or threatened disclosures, including damages for emotional distress, whether or not accompanied by other damages.

A prevailing party may recover statutory damages not to exceed $10,000 against each defendant.

In determining the amount of statutory damages, consideration must be given to the age of the parties, the number of disclosures or threatened disclosures made, the breadth of distribution, and other exacerbating or mitigating factors.

An unauthorized disclosure may be brought at any time after the date the disclosure was discovered or should have been discovered with the exercise of reasonable negligence.

The bill says a threat to disclose may be brought at any time after the date of the threat to disclose.

Guerrero stated that some adults in the CNMI have had their nude or semi-nude image of themselves sent to others or posted online without their permission. One concerning trend, among others, was that of "revenge porn"—the term given to the nonconsensual distribution of nude or sexual imagery of one person by a current or former intimate partner. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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24,305 MILES
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2016 KIA RIO
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8,730 MILES • STK:8HS878 • KBB: $19,449
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7,365 MILES • STK:18HS965C • KBB: $22,095
2017 HYUNDAI ACCENT GLS
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21,585 MILES • STK:7R220 • KBB: $12,682
2018 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
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7,910 MILES • STK:8HS875 • KBB: $19,496
2015 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LE
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62,811 MILES • STK:5HS735A • KBB: $19,031
2014 MAZDA CX-9
SALE PRICE $12,995
34,682 MILES • STK:4P298 • KBB: $13,199
2016 HYUNDAI VELOSTER
SALE PRICE $14,995
39,217MILES • STK: 20H068-A • KBB: $15,830
2019 MAZDA CX-5 SPORT
SOLD
SALE PRICE $21,995
STK:20H104-A • KBB: $24,573
2017 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $13,995
34,648 MILES • STK:20M094A • KBB: $14,967
2016 HYUNDAI TUCSON GL
SALE PRICE $15,995
58,260 MILES • STK: 20D063A • KBB: $16,231
2018 HONDA CIVIC EXT
SALE PRICE $21,995
9,993 MILES • STK:18HS935 • KBB: $15,835
2017 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $13,995
34,789 MILES • STK:7R218 • KBB: $15,129
2017 MAZDA CX-3 GT AWD
SALE PRICE $16,995
18,475 MILES • STK: 7P295 • KBB: $18,470
2013 TOYOTA 4RUNNER
SALE PRICE $22,995
70,356 MILES • STK:3P291 • KBB: $23,910
2016 TOYOTA PRIUS C
SALE PRICE $14,995
48,814 MILES • STK:20D134A • KBB: $16,585
2017 MAZDA CX-5 GT 2WD
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Over 10K vaccinated in the CNMI

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

As of yesterday, a total of 10,644 residents on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian have been vaccinated with either the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine or the Moderna Inc. vaccine, according to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s dashboard.

CHCC said a total of 7,267 residents have already completed their first dose, while 3,337 have completed their second dose. This is an increase of 1,319 people who have been vaccinated. Rota has also seen an increase of 89 people getting vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine.

As for Tinian, their numbers stayed the same on the dashboard with 141 who have gotten their first dose. According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the Tinian and Rota populations are expected to receive their second doses in mid-February, because you have to take the Pfizer vaccine 21 days after the first dose, and 28 days for Moderna.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said that Phase 1B is the only phase open to receive the vaccines. She added that they will expand once they receive the latest shipment today.

As for age distribution, the following are the numbers:

- 81+: 169 vaccinated
- 70-79: 718 vaccinated
- 60-69: 1,804 vaccinated
- 50-59: 1,647 vaccinated
- 40-49: 1,097 vaccinated
- 30-39: 942 vaccinated
- 20-29: 870 vaccinated
- <19: 20 vaccinated

COVID-19 in Guam

The Joint Information Center in Guam reported eight new COVID-19 positive cases. The eight cases were identified out of 553 tests that were performed last Feb. 2. JIC stated that six cases were reported to have recently traveled, and were identified in quarantine.

To date, there have been a total of 7,618 cases of COVID-19 in Guam, with 129 deaths, 82 cases in active isolation, and 7,407 not in active isolation.

As for their vaccinations, Guam has administered a total of 29,504 vaccinations of both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines.

For Pfizer, a total of 19,967 have been administered. This consist of 13,070 first doses, and 6,897 second doses. A total of 6,897 have been fully immunized.

For Moderna, 9,537 have been administered.

Guam has administered 86.01% of its allocation of 34,300 doses. This means that 29,504 have been administered, and 4,796 remain untouched.

IPI

From Page 1

so it can petition the Superior Court to release the $2.3 million being held under the crane litigation fund.

In the lawsuit filed by U.S. Department of Labor, District Court for NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona allowed the removal of Crane 4 from the IPI construction site but maintained the stop-work order that prohibits work on the hotel-casino project.

In a notice filed in court by Glenn Bell, the leader of the Italian construction team, Bell said IPI allowed workers on site last week to dismantle Crane 4 in blatant disregard of court directions. However, Manglona clarified that the stop-work order prohibits work on the improvement, construction, and development of the IPI hotel-casino only, and does not prohibit work to remove the crane.

Right now, only the top portion of the crane has been removed. With the court's go-signal, IPI will then work to remove the crane's supporting structure. IPI attorney Michael Dotts informed the court that IPI anticipates to take the equipment down in the next three to six days.

Dotts explained in a hearing last week that $2.3 million had been deposited with the CNMI Superior Court to serve as the crane litigation fund in case a lawsuit is filed relating to the cranes and their safety. Aside from one claim against those funds for $250,000, IPI can petition for the remainder of the funds after the removal of crane 4.

IPI is looking at using the crane litigation funds to satisfy the sanctions imposed on it to purge itself of contempt.

According to court documents, a subcontractor of IPI, under the supervision of two IPI employees, were allowed onto the jobsite last Jan. 29 to resume the removal of Crane 4 despite the stop-work order.

Dotts said IPI employees allowed it and were present for supervision because of a miscommunication regarding the stop-work order.

IPI employees believed that the stop-work order did not cover removal of the crane. The other IPI employees then brought the subcontractor onto the jobsite.

Dotts said he discovered that the crane was being removed through the filing made in court by Bell, the Italian construction worker team leader.

Last week, Manglona ordered IPI to pay the remaining balance on the consent judgement in the next 30 days or a receiver would be appointed to liquidate its assets.

The balance of the consent judgment is at $1.2 million and IPI must also deposit $800,000 into an escrow account to cover future employee payrolls.

DOL

From Page 1

"We will be opening soon," she told the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government, Law and Federal Relations in response to the senators' questions after her presentation on PUA and PFUC programs.

In a later interview, Benavente said the department is shooting for a week or two from this week to reopen the programs. She said there are new document requirements, identification verification, among others, and all information and instructions will be given out prior to the reopening.

"Everyone needs to have a valid ID, a valid driver's ID or a valid passport," she said.

Committee chair Sen. Karl King-Nabors (R-Tinian) called for the meeting to hear about the status of PUA and PFUC from the Department of Labor.

Benavente said they have requested for $185 million for this second round of the PUA/PFUC programs, compared to the $249 million they asked for in the first round.

"So $185 million for 11 weeks or about 26,000 applicants," said Benavente, adding that they are hoping to hear from U.S. Labor if their request for $185 million is approved. "Which is why we can't open it yet," she said.

In the first round, CNMI DOL's request for $240 million was approved, but they only received $192 million. "We haven't received the full amount. There are conditions to be met. Data reports," she said.

Benavente said PUA 1 is closed, but they still have a few being adjudicated. "So we are processing. It's not to say that they're disqualified just because the program is closed," she said.

In response to Sen. Teresita A. Santos' (Ind-Rota) concerns, Benavente said they responded to the senator in which they advised her that they are very concerned for any applicant who has not been adjudicated to date.

In Santos' letter to Benavente, she stated that many people on Rota have yet to receive any PUA or PFUC payments since they first applied.

Santos said she continues to receive such disheartening news and that some complained too that they have been partially paid and are waiting for past payments.

Benavente said their record shows there were 700 applicants from Rota and 800 from Tinian and that there are 10 on Rota that have not been processed yet. On Tinian, that's about five who have not been adjudicated yet. "We're going to try and resolve these claimants," she added. "So out of 800 and 700, it's not a good number, but it's not a bad number to have those that are not adjudicated to date," she said.

Benavente said the main reason again is lack of documents, and maybe they are ineligible as far as requirements are concerned.

» Benavente says record shows only 10 from Rota, five from Tinian not yet processed

» $14.99M collected from overpayment cases; $12.33M in fraudulent claims out of state, territory intercepted

She said some of the applicants do not understand why they are not eligible and they go to the senator with their concern. "We always assist the claimants and see how we can help them process the applications quicker," Benavente said.

In her presentation before the Senate, Benavente said that, as of Jan. 31, 2021, a total of 2,018 overpayment cases have been identified. These include misfiled earnings, ineligible claimants, customary wages, and out-of-state cases.

So far, a total of $14,994,019 has been collected from overpayment cases, Benavente said.

She said 1,238 cases have been identified as out of state/territory cases, or $12,334,966 in fraudulent claims that have been intercepted.

She said 312 cases have been identified as claimants that don't fall under the "qualified alien" definition such as CW1s, EADs, H1Bs, H2Bs, and/or no legal working status.

She said 468 case have been identified as disqualified claims, and/or unclaimed earnings, and customary wages.

MCS

From Page 1

basketball and volleyball.

Throughout his time at MCS, San Nicolas has led more than 10 basketball and volleyball teams to championships. In addition to his role as a coach, San Nicolas found creative ways and solutions to facilitate virtual physical education lessons during the school's hybrid learning period at the beginning of the pandemic. San Nicolas is regarded within the school community as a thoughtful, devoted, and caring teacher who is also always willing to have meaningful conversations with colleagues and students.

"I was surprised when it was announced that I am the Teacher of the Year," said San Nicolas. "I honestly love what I do and I enjoy helping the school in any way that I can. I see the school community as a second family and if there are ways I can contribute then I am always willing to help. My hope as a coach and instructor is to help provide our students with more resources to accomplish their personal and athletic goals. I see so much potential in our students each school year and I always want to provide them with the tools they need to succeed." Tamondong, on the other hand, has worked at MCS for three years and assists homeroom instructors in kindergarten through sixth grade. Beyond her duties as a teacher aid, Tamondong has also assisted in organization projects throughout the summer and is regarded as a kind and hardworking professional.

"I am so happy, proud, and just so appreciative of the school's support. I wasn't expecting to be given this award, but I'm so grateful that they see my efforts and chose me…," said Tamondong.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

FIRMING

From Page 1

Speaking during a House Committee on Gaming hearing last week, Yeom said he has investigated and researched the "blacklist issue" and has learned that a way to avoid having the CNMI included in China's "blacklist" is to have CCC monitor junket operators, regulate cross-border money transfers, among other things.

"We will strengthen the anti-money laundering initiative to make sure that we let the world know that we're here to clear up all the regulations in terms of the Anti-Money Laundering concerns," he said.

Yeom talked about the "blacklist" issue in response to a question from committee chair Rep. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), who cited multiple news sources that China is looking at blacklisting several countries because of corruption or some other issues. He said the news sources disclosed that more countries will be named later in the blacklist.

"Are you concerned about how this affects the future prospect of gaming casino here in the Commonwealth?" Propst asked.

In response, Yeom said that China is primarily worried about money laundering and cross-border money transfers.

With the CNMI or CCC sending a strong message about being transparent and strong in its regulatory functions, Yeom believes this will be helpful to the casino industry. "And this is something that I have consulted with other experts in the world. That should help us to continue the casino operation," he said.

Yeom said Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC still has to improve its business plan.

Separately, Tao Xing, IPI senior vice president of Marketing and Public Affairs, said at the same hearing that the China Travel Bureau issued last Aug. 26 a sort of announcement about a plan to publish a gaming destination blacklist. "But so far the list hasn't been published. We have been monitoring that closely," Tao said.

From a business perspective, Tao said IPI needs to enhance its compliance in making sure that they're rigorously following the rules against money laundering. "[We have to] make sure we have education and properly reinforce our education department. Make sure we have the full training," he said.

Second, Tao said, they have to shift their business model from VIP market to mass market to premium mass so that they can accommodate the change.

"The last point I just want to make is that, given all the destinations, if you look at Australia, if you look at Singapore, our size is relatively small," said Tao, adding that they are hoping that this will not trigger some significant attention from the Chinese government.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-21-015

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR THE WATER & WASTEWATER CERTIFIED OPERATOR TRAINING PROGRAM

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified firms for Professional Services for the Water & Wastewater Certified Operator Training Program for the islands Saipan, Tinian and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project is funded by the US Department of Interior-Office of Insular Affairs.

Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$100.00** for one RFP package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-RFP-21-015, Professional Services for the Water & Wastewater Certified Operator Training Program"* to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 19, 2021**. Proposals mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Proposal shall be submitted on the provided Proposal Forms. Proposals will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal under the contract. Proposers are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Request for Proposals should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the Proposer, awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposals does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director's approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 29, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email address-manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Vivian Santos, Human Resources Manager via email-Vivian.santos@cucgov.org; Francisco Matsunaga, HR Generalist, via email francisco.matsunaga@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Senior Administrative Support Technician via email- marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-018

RELOCATION OF UTILITIES AT ROAD (A-F) AND ROUTE 205/206 TINIAN

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Relocation of Utilities at Road A-F and Route 205/206 in Tinian, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The project consists, in general relocation of gate valves, water meters, waterlines, fire hydrant assembly and other related work. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the water system.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States Department of Defense (USDOD). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USDOD.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **180 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **February 2, 2021 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-21-018, *Relocation of Utilities at Road A-F and Route 205/206 Tinian*"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 25, 2021**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) of the total bid price shall accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). **Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.**

All bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 09, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Joel Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email joel.puyat@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Procurement & Supply, Administrative Technician, Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any non-material imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Masks required at CPA ports

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has expanded its efforts to ensure that any person entering or is in an airport or seaport must wear a mask, in accordance with a presidential executive order, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, and other federal memoranda.

These efforts include the requirement that all employees, tenants, vendors, visitors, and traveling passengers properly wear masks at CPA ports. A properly worn mask will completely cover the nose and mouth of the wearer.

Persons requesting an exemption from this requirement must provide a medical consultation by a third party or medical documentation by a licensed medical provider that advises the person not wear a mask. Individuals requesting an exemption must also provide evidence that he does not have COVID-19, such as a negative result from a SARCoV-2 viral test or documentation of recovery from COVID-19. Last, any persons refusing to comply and wear a mask or act in compliance with CDC guidelines will be removed from the premises.

This comes soon after President Joe Biden issued an executive order titled "Promoting COVID-19 Safety in Domestic and International Travel" last Jan. 21, 2021.

The executive order implements public health measures consistent with CDC guidelines on public modes of transportation and at ports of entry to the United States. These guidelines are contained within CDC's Jan. 29, 2021, emergency order.

CDC's guidelines require that all persons wear masks over their mouth and nose when traveling and while at "transportation hubs." The term "transportation hubs" includes airports, bus terminals, marinas, seaports, other ports, and terminals.

The guidelines also provide five circumstances where an individual will not be required to wear a mask: while eating, drinking, or taking medication, for brief periods; while communicating with a person who is hearing impaired when the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication; when the use of an oxygen mask is needed on an aircraft; when an individual is incapacitated, unable to be awakened, or unable to remove the mask without assistance, excluding sleeping; and when necessary to verify one's identity, such as during Transportation Security Administration screening. Additionally, other federal memoranda indicate that if a person's mask is removed to eat, drink, or take medications, then such removal may not be for prolonged periods and the mask must be worn between bites and sips.

The guidelines also exempt the following individuals from the mask-wearing requirement: children under the age of 2; persons with disabilities that cannot wear a mask because of the disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act; and persons for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duties.

For more information regarding the executive order visit the following website: http://shorturl.at/wzD29. For more information regarding the emergency order visit: http://shorturl.at/mrzB4. ***(PR)***

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Chunyanyin Rivera Petitioner, vs. Victor Norita Rivera Respondent,

FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 21-0028 FCD

SUMMONS OR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 506492 Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 20th day of January, 2021.

/s/ Clerk of Court

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Guam tax refunds out

Guam's Department of Revenue & Taxation has processed and the Department of Administration will mail 770 2019 tax refund checks this week.

The checks total approximately $2,232,090 for error-free returns filed on or before Sept. 16, 2020. For inquiries, contact us via the Contact Us section of our website or at pinadmin@revtax.guam.gov. ***(PR)***

CHamoru commission meeting set

The *Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'nå'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tåno'* (Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People of Guam) will hold its first February monthly Virtual meeting today, Feb, 4, 2021, Thursday from 12:30pm to 3:30pm on a Zoom Link. Email Kumisión board secretary Rosa Salas Palomo for Zoom link information, special accommodations, and agenda at kailee.rosapalomo@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID
ITB21-CHCC/THC-001

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 11, 2021 TIME:10:00AM (CHST)

"TINIAN HEALTH CENTER NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWLOAD THIS INVITATION TO BID FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSAL AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY PROPOSAL, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

USCG cutter joins search for missing mariner off Guam

HONOLULU—The crew of the Coast Guard cutter *Kimball* joined the search last Tuesday for a missing mariner from the fishing vessel *Miyamaru No. 18*, which was 722 miles southwest of Guam.

The mariner was last seen Sunday when he was witnessed attempting to swim between fishing vessels. Since then a search consisting of good Samaritans and international partners has been ongoing.

"We have been coordinating with the Japan Coast Guard, Australia, our Department of Defense partners, and good Samaritans aboard both fishing and commercial vessels in the area throughout the case," said Lt. Cmdr. Tory Saxon, a search and rescue mission coordinator at Joint-Rescue Sub-Center Guam. "When it comes to long range search and rescue operations such as this, our partnerships are vital because of the distances involved."

At 11:30pm, Sunday, a mariner aboard the fishing vessel *Miyamaru No. 18* was witnessed by his fellow crew members attempting to swim to a nearby fishing vessel. The crew lost sight of him and began searching the area. At 2:27am, Monday, JRSC watchstanders received a report from the Japan Coast Guard notifying them of the situation.

JRSC Guam watchstanders issued a Safety Net broadcast to mariners and began reaching out to partners and Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System ships in the area to assist with the search.

The crew of the *Kimball* was also diverted from its patrol nearby and began making way to the search area. the cutter is one of the coast guard's new national security cutters and has the ability to deploy small unmanned aircraft systems during search and rescue cases.

Others involved in the search are a Navy P-8 Poseidon aircrew, an Australian Defence Forces P-8 Poseidon aircrew, Good Samaritans aboard 15 fishing vessels, JRSC Guam watchstanders, and JRCC Honolulu watchstanders.

The weather conditions on scene are winds of 20 mph and seas up to 4-6 feet.

AMVER is a worldwide voluntary reporting system sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard. It is a computer-based global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea. Today, over 22,000 ships from hundreds of nations participate in AMVER. ***(USCG)***

The crew of USCGC *Kimball* cheer the first of the team ashore upon arrival in Honolulu Dec. 22, 2018. NSCs are 418 feet in length, 54 feet in beam and 4,600 long tons in displacement. They have a top speed of more than 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, an endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 150.

U.S. COAST GUARD/CHIEF PETTY OFFICER SARA MUIR

Help distribute $90K in emergency food and shelter funds

Public or private voluntary agencies that are interested in applying for Emergency Food and Shelter Program funds are being reminded that the deadline to submit an application is this Friday, Feb. 5.

This comes soon after the CNMI was awarded $90,188 to allow it to support emergency relief efforts to supplement emergency food and shelter programs in the Commonwealth. The federal funds are made available through the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency under the Emergency Food and Shelter Program national board program.

The NMI Local Board will determine how the funds awarded to the CNMI are to be distributed among the emergency food and shelter programs run by local service agencies. Qualifying agencies are urged to apply. Previously, the CNMI local Board has distributed these funds to the Salvation Army, Empty Vessel Ministry Foundation, Karidat Social Services, Division of Youth Services, and the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Those who want to help distribute these funds should contact John Hirsh at the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter at 234-3459 for an application.

Under the terms of the grant from the National Board, local agencies chosen to receive funds must: 1) be private voluntary nonprofits or units of government, 2) be eligible to receive Federal funds, 3) have an accounting system, 4) practice nondiscrimination, 5) have demonstrated the capability to deliver emergency food and/or shelter programs, and 6) if they are a private voluntary organization, have a voluntary board. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAES-21-013

A&E Design Services for the Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement (S19-068)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Lower Miha Homestead Sewerline Replacement in Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAES-21-013, A&E Design Services for Lower Miha Sewerline Replacement"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 12, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Dennis Formalejo, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email dennis.formalejo@cucgov.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior – via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 21-022
Re-Announcement Ref. 20-018

Opening Date: January 11, 2020
Closing Date: Until Filled

POSITION TITLE:	**Trades Technician: Welder**
DEPARTMENT:	**Power Generation**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$20,826.00 to $28,115.00 per annum, Non- Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Two (2)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Power Generation Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the department.

Duties:

- Perform all kinds of welding, brazing, and cutting using gas and electric welding equipment as assigned;
- Be able to read and interpret blueprints and machine drawings to determine specific welding requirements;
- Plans details of working procedure and tools and material requirements; Personal protection equipment needs to be work when necessary; Fabricates by cutting, burning, and welding various metals.
- Repairs equipment by using welding techniques and appropriate welding equipment;
- Select welding procedures best suited to type of work and materials involved and vary techniques to obtain proper penetration, fusion and strength, offset distortion and maintain alignment;
- Usually specializes on a specific type of certified welding and equipment, electric arc, gas or arc/gas combinations typical of methods applied to material types, but assignment may vary;
- Fit up complicated but standard structures and weldments involving a considerable number of parts and details, using the clamp and tack method or welding jigs, fixtures and turning rigs;
- Cleans and prepares surfaces to be welded;
- Set up, assembles, and tacks weld parts,
- Builds up worn or defective surfaces,
- Uses burning equipment to dismantle assemblies and to cut material to size and shape;
- Aligns, fits, and joins parts by welding;
- Determines fixtures, machines, tooling, and sequence of operations to fabricate parts according to drawings and sketches;
- Records specifications, and final dimensions of model for use in establishing operating standards and fabrication procedures;
- Consults and confers with engineering personnel to discuss developmental problems and recommend modifications to correct or improve fabrication or welding techniques;
- Devises and constructs jigs, and or modifies existing tools and equipment;
- Positions and attaches stops and drills holes to facilitate welding, using drill press and hand tools;
- Inspects and tests weldment or other fabricated works to verify conformance to specifications;
- Lays out and marks reference points and dimension on materials, using measuring instruments and drawing or scribing tools;
- Keeps equipment and work area clean and orderly;
- May be assigned to dismantle cut up obsolete machinery, setting aside parts for scrap dealer;
- Monitors inventory and supplies; maintains required supply levels; initiates requests for the replenishment of materials and supplies;
- Able to work under minimal supervision and to deadlines.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: Proven welding/fabrication competency skills and certification; Completion of formal apprenticeship program or completion of in-company, three-year training program; Welding Trainings/Certifications (Bureau of Ships or U.S. Navy, etc.). High School Diploma or General Education Diploma or Adult Basic Education Program. Graduate from a Vocational/Technical Institution as a Welder or related field. Must demonstrate having had (A) 4 years of increasingly responsible experience in a diesel engine power plant and (B) those 4 years of increasingly responsible experience are to be performing welder duties. Attention and care required to prevent injury to others when performing maintenance work.
Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Principles, practices and procedures of assigned service area; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.
Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Performing skilled maintenance, operations and repair work in assigned area; Reviewing quality levels and providing technical guidance in assigned area; Operating specialized and heavy equipment; Monitoring equipment and making adjustments; Performing inspections and identifying issues; Troubleshooting issues and recommending or implementing solutions; Receiving requests and trouble calls and providing assistance; Monitoring inventory and supplies; Initiating supply requests; Preparing and updating activity logs and status reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications. Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
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CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

The US should make it clear to the Myanmar military that its power grab is the wrong way to go

The Myanmar military's seizure of power and overthrow of the country's fragile quasi-democracy should be met with a swift, definitive and coordinated response from the U.S. and its allies. President Joe Biden denounced the coup Monday as an "assault on the country's transition to democracy" and called for the Myanmar military—which was already sharing governmental control with civilians—to give up, immediately, the power it seized and release the civilian officials detained. Those include Aung San Suu Kyi, the de facto leader of Myanmar and Nobel Peace Prize-winning champion of democracy.

If the military does not reverse course, Biden needs to reimpose at least some of the economic sanctions that Myanmar (also known as Burma) was under when it was last run by generals. The U.S. removed many of those sanctions in recognition of Myanmar's remarkable transition to democracy over the past decade. But this latest act by the military is a grim backslide into a dictatorship that the U.S. and its allies need to make clear is intolerable.

The Myanmar senior military general-turned-autocrat, Min Aung Hlaing, and three other military leaders were already under U.S. economic sanctions for their roles in the brutal campaign of violence against the Rohingya Muslim minority in 2016 and 2017. United Nations investigators have called that genocide. The sanctions prevent those individuals from banking in the U.S. or making transactions in U.S. dollars.

Now, the U.S. and its allies should impose more sweeping economic sanctions against the military itself and its leadership. In Myanmar, military leaders largely control conglomerates that own oil and gas enterprises, restaurants, banks, manufacturing companies and jade, ruby and sapphire mines, among other businesses. The U.S. can prohibit American companies—and foreign companies subject to U.S. jurisdiction—from dealing with those Myanmar businesses or with designated military individuals.

The cause of democracy in Myanmar enjoys wide bipartisan support in Congress. When that cause is under siege, as it is now, Biden should be able to muster support from both parties for an aggressive pushback against the Myanmar military. And U.S. officials shouldn't stop there—they should also get our major trading partners to join in the sanctions and magnify the pressure on the coup leaders.

It's not just the development of a democratic government at stake here. As bad as the plight of the Rohingya Muslims has been under Suu Kyi—who did almost nothing to protect them from oppression—it may only get worse under a military government that believes it answers to no one.

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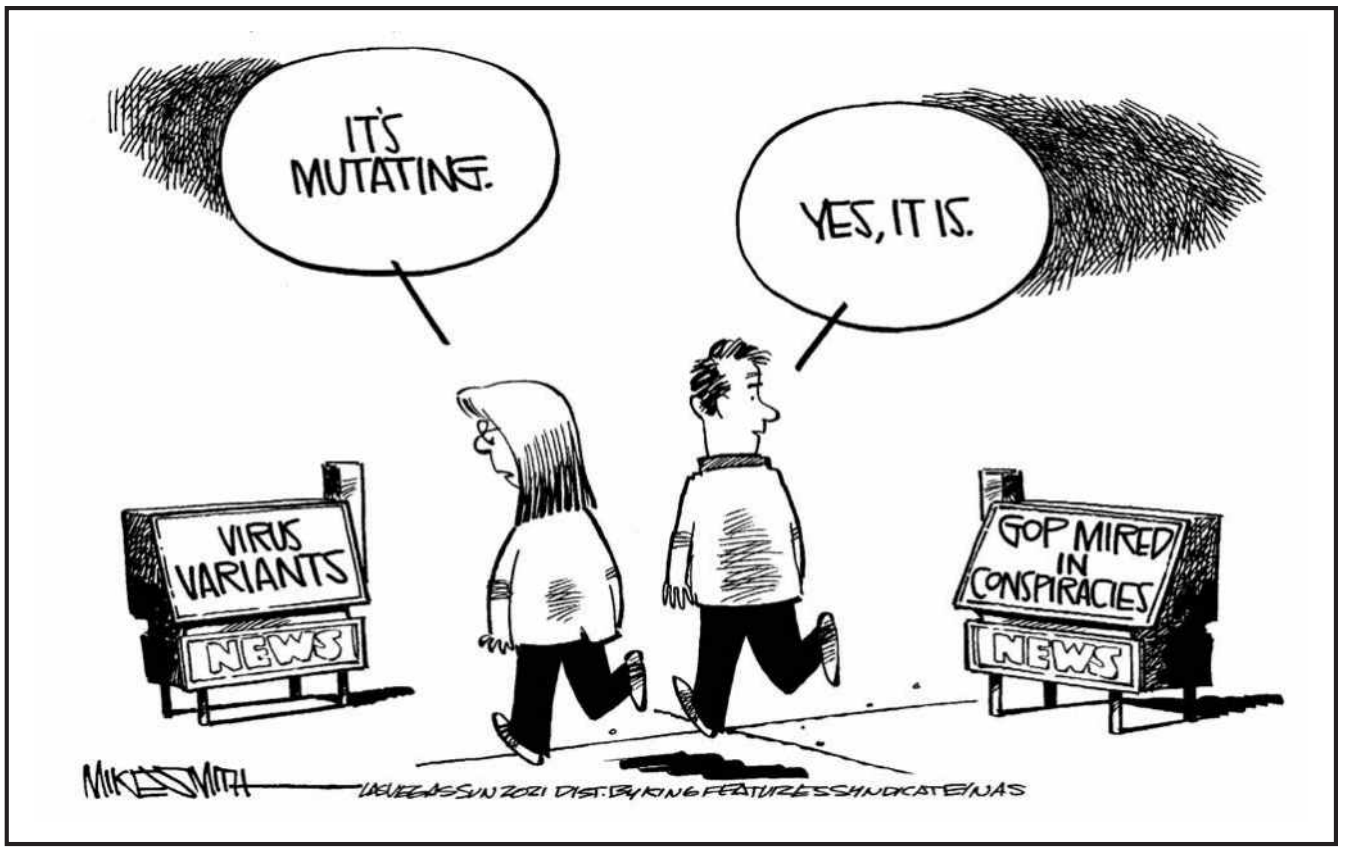


How Bezos and Amazon changed the world

By VENKATESH SHANKAR
Texas A&M University

Amazon announced Jeff Bezos is stepping down as CEO almost 27 years after he founded the company to sell books to customers over dial-up modems.

Amazon wasn't the first bookstore to sell online, but it wanted to be "Earth's biggest." When it first launched, a bell would ring in the company's Seattle headquarters every time an order was placed. Within weeks, the bell was ringing so frequently employees had to turn it off.

But Bezos set his sights on making it an "everything store." After achieving dominance in retail, the company would go on to become a sprawling and powerful global conglomerate in numerous lines of business.

Today, Amazon is the third-most valuable U.S. company—behind Apple and Microsoft—with a market capitalization of around US$1.7 trillion, greater than the gross domestic product of all but a dozen or so countries.

Here's how Bezos reshaped retailing.

Redefining retail

Amazon—named after the world's largest river—continually took shopping convenience to newer levels.

Before Amazon's founding on July 5, 1994, shoppers had to travel to stores to discover and buy things. Shopping used to be hard work—wandering down multiple aisles in search of a desired item, dealing with crying and nagging kids, and waiting in long checkout lines. Today, stores try to reach out to shoppers anywhere, anytime and through multiple channels and devices.

After first experiencing two-day free shipping from Amazon's Prime membership program, shoppers started expecting no less from every online retailer. An estimated 142 million shoppers in the U.S. have Amazon Prime.

The company made shopping more convenient through features like one-click ordering; personalized recommendations; package pickup at Amazon hubs and lockers; ordering products with the single touch of a Dash button; and in-home delivery with Amazon Key.

Shoppers can also search for and order items through a simple voice command to an Echo or by clicking an Instagram or Pinterest image. Amazon even has a cashier-less "Go" store in Seattle.

Amazon has also been a factor in the rising closures of brick-and-mortar stores that can't keep pace with the changes in retail. Even before the pandemic, stores were closing at a phenomenal rate, with analysts predicting a coming "retail apocalypse." Amazon benefited enormously last year as much of the U.S. went into lockdown and more consumers preferred ordering goods online rather than risking their health by going to physical stores.

Amazon's share price has almost doubled since the lockdown began in March 2020, even as over 11,000 retail stores closed their doors.

A major employer

Amazon's impact extends to other industries, including smart consumer devices like Alexa, cloud services like Amazon Web Services and technology products like drones.

Such is Amazon's impact that industry players and observers use the term "Amazoned" to describe their business model and operations being disrupted by Amazon.

Today, Amazon is the second-largest U.S.-based publicly listed employer and the fifth biggest in the world. It employs 1.2 million people, having hired 427,000 during the pandemic. No wonder Amazon created such a buzz in 2018 when it held a competition to select a location for its second headquarters. It eventually picked Arlington, Virginia.

Amazon's work culture is intense. It has a reputation as a cut-throat environment with a high employee burnout rate. It is automating as many jobs as possible, mostly in warehousing.

At the same time, after criticism from policymakers, Amazon stepped up in 2018 and raised the minimum wage for its U.S. employees to $15 per hour.

Faced with growing criticisms about the mounting impact of Amazon's boxes and other packaging material on the environment, Amazon has also pledged to disclose more information about its environmental impact.

The next generation

What's in store for Amazon as Bezos steps down from his CEO role later this year?

Bezos, who will stay on as Amazon's executive chairman, has previously said his focus is on preventing Amazon from dying. As he noted at a 2018 all-hands meeting, "Amazon is not too big to fail."

[Deep knowledge, daily. Sign up for The Conversation's newsletter.]

As a professor of marketing who has conducted research on online retailing and analyzed hundreds of cases, I believe that Amazon's future—and humanity's—is inextricably linked to the rise of artificial intelligence. Starting with Alexa, the company's virtual assistant, Amazon is betting on AI.

In fact, Amazon is testing anticipatory shipping, a practice in which it anticipates what shoppers need and mails the items before shoppers order them. Shoppers can keep the items they like and return those they don't want at no charge. It is also betting on

See BEZOS on Next Page

How shocking that the GOP now has a QAnon problem in their ranks

By VENKATESH SHANKAR
Texas A&M University

Peter Jensen is an editorial writer at The Baltimore Sun*; he can be reached at pejensen@baltsun.com.*

To paraphrase the Book of Matthew, you live by the sword and you die by the sword. Two thousand years later, this is just as true. A once-proud political party, the one that gave us Abraham Lincoln, stoops to playing footsie with deranged conspiracy theorists and white supremacists and lo and behold, here's what gets elected to the U.S. House of Representatives under their banner: No less than Marjorie Taylor Greene, the 46-year-old former gym owner who holds views that can, at the very least, be described as wacky or fringe-y but also clearly racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, fascist, insurrectionist and un-American.

Exceptionally gross comes to mind, too, particularly given that the Georgia Republican believes that infamous mass shooting events such as the attack on Sandy Hook Elementary were phony or perhaps staged to feed a gun control narrative. And did I mention she's been known to ridicule young victims of school shootings?

But then you don't really need a casual observer to point all of this out. It's not exactly a secret. No less a personage than Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell offered a robust condemnation of her just this week describing the congresswoman's views as "loony lies" and a "cancer" for his political party.

"Somebody who's suggested that perhaps no airplane hit the Pentagon on 9/11, that horrifying school shootings were prestaged and that the Clintons crashed JFK Jr.'s airplane is not living in reality," McConnell said. I would celebrate the senator's clear-eyed take on this, except it's years late and does not go far enough. Where was he when Donald Trump slipped off the rails these last four years and went around endorsing such crazy candidates and then attacked voting? Missing in action is where. Even now, the senator can't quite bring himself to acknowledge the role of his party and his president in creating this legacy.

The vigorous call for the congresswoman to be denied her seats on committees (especially the one that supervises education, for heaven's sake) is so plainly needed that one wonders why House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy hasn't already embraced it. Oh, right, because he's even more committed to the ex-president than McConnell. Has it occurred to him that the upcoming impeachment trial is going to explore the recent attack on the U.S. Capitol and that the party's casual acceptance of riot cheerleaders like QAnon-fan Greene, who has specifically endorsed violence against fellow House members (liking a 2019 social media comment about putting a "bullet to the head" of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, for example), is going to look really, really bad. Good on Maryland's own Steny Hoyer, the House majority leader, for promising a vote to strip those committee assignments if Republicans can't police their own.

It's also thoroughly unsurprising that Greene sees herself as a victim in all this brouhaha, lashing out at McConnell and suggesting Monday that "the real cancer for the Republican Party is weak Republicans who only know how to lose gracefully." But hey, if Republicans knew how to lose gracefully, the Jan. 6 attack wouldn't have happened, so there's another wacky theory down the drain along with Barack Obama is a Muslim, Hillary Clinton ran a human trafficking ring out of a D.C. pizza parlor and the attack on the Capitol was a product of the Black Lives Matter movement. One can only assume that lots of voters living in Georgia's 14th Congressional District don't buy most of this malarkey (to use a Joe Bidenism), but they may think this comes with the "outsider who shakes things up" political persona that Trump so popularized.

In more civil times, political parties actively discouraged extremism if only as a matter of self-preservation in a nation where most voters seem themselves in the middle of the political spectrum. Now, they seem to encourage it as a way to energize their base. And with the rise of social media, candidates don't really need traditional party structure to do their fundraising, outreach and organizing. Greene isn't the first of her kind and she's unlikely to be the last (paging Colorado Rep. Lauren "Today is 1776″ Boebert). Democrats may see advantage in this, but they probably shouldn't. A failure of Republican Party centrists bodes poorly for the governance of this nation. And the Democrats have their own left-wing issues to contend with. Perhaps none quite so out-and-out crazy as Greene, but Twitter certainly hosts its share of liberal extremists, too. Just with fewer nutty conspiracy theories.

The GOP is making protest illegal

By ERIC STONER
PROGRESSIVE MEDIA PROJECT

In the wake of the horrifying right-wing assault on the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, Republicans have flooded state legislatures with an unprecedented number of laws aimed at curbing future "riots" across the country. So far at least 13 states have introduced at least 26 anti-protest bills since that attack, according to the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law's protest law tracker.

At first glance, it might seem like Republicans are finally taking responsibility for the wave of armed protests by their supporters across the country. In fact, opportunistic state legislators are merely repackaging laws they have promoted for years to squash racial and environmental justice protests.

Legislation in Florida, Nebraska, Mississippi, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Washington and Indiana would expand the legal definition of a riot to target peaceful, if disruptive, protests. These bills create new felony penalties for rioting, which is broadly redefined to include "tumultuous conduct," blocking streets or sidewalks, and obstructing law enforcement or other governmental functions.

Other so-called "critical infrastructure" bills—like the one that Ohio's governor signed into law in January—are aimed at stopping protests against the fossil fuel industry. The proposals introduced in Minnesota would make trespassing "with the intent to disrupt the operation" of a pipeline a felony, in a clear attempt to thwart the ongoing Indigenous-led movement to stop Enbridge's Line 3 tar sands pipeline.

But that is just the beginning of the danger that these anti-protest laws pose. They would variously criminalize the removal of Confederate monuments, bar public benefits and government jobs to demonstrators, ban "camping" outside state capitols, or even protect those who hit protesters with their cars.

Sadly, car attacks are not an abstract threat. White supremacists and the far right—both civilians and police—deliberately plowed their vehicles into Black Lives Matter demonstrators more than 100 times in the months following the killing of George Floyd, according to a report in USA Today.

In perhaps the most absurd provision, a bill in Mississippi would punish any group of six or more people with up to three years in jail and a $5,000 fine for disturbing "any person in the enjoyment of a legal right." If enacted, all protests would essentially be rendered illegal.

The historical record paints a clear picture. Anti-protest laws, dating back to the Sedition Act of 1798, have not been a response to the threat of violence, but to legitimate dissent and organizing for social change. And this raft of new laws continues that ignominious tradition.

Every advance for freedom and justice that the United States has made since its founding is the result of dedicated social movements that disrupted the status quo.

Abolitionists were accused of sedition as they hastened the end of slavery. Women won the right to vote after hounding President Wilson for years outside the White House. The Voting Rights Act was passed after thousands of civil rights protesters, including Martin Luther King Jr., blocked traffic during the historic march from Selma to Montgomery.

More recently, undocumented "Dreamers" blocked intersections to secure Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Disabled activists obstructing the halls of Congress with their wheelchairs were instrumental in stopping the repeal of the Affordable Care Act. And the Sunrise Movement put the Green New Deal on the national agenda with a sit-in at House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office.

As the Biden administration gets to work, tackling climate change, establishing universal health care or rolling back gaping inequality will require far more disruptive protest, not less. And that requires first killing these undemocratic bills.

Eric Stoner is a co-founder and editor of Waging Nonviolence*, and an adjunct professor at St. Joseph's College. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by* The Progressive *magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Round 2 of Tinian vaccinations: When

When will the elders of Tinian who were not informed of Round 1 COVID-19 vaccinations receive their inoculations?

Don Farrell
Marpo Heights, Tinian

BEZOS

From Page 8

cashier-free stores and AI-powered home robots.

Amazon's future success will depend on how the incoming CEO—current head of cloud computing Andy Jassy—navigates these new technologies while pushing the company into more industries, such as health care and financial services.

His challenge is to keep Bezos' legacy and Amazon's disruptive culture alive and prevent it from dying.

This is an updated version of an article originally published on July 3, 2019. This article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. The Conversation is an independent and nonprofit source of news, analysis and commentary from academic experts. Read the original article here: https://theconversation.com/how-bezos-and-amazon-changed-the-world-154546.

Food Fight

The stage was set for The Island Heavyweight
Championship Fight, food fans couldn't wait.
Spam stood in one corner, mighty and proud.
Hot Dog opposite the ring, obnoxious and loud.

Folding chairs in the pala pala almost burst
Under butts of those with great hunger and thirst.
That this bout even came about was a testament
To the jealously that led to this predicament.

Ever since the military brought out this processed stuff,
The people in the islands can't seem to get enough.
One or the other meat product, locals didn't care
As long as it was there on their dinnerware.

Social media finally got to Hot Dog and Spam.
Folks dissed them really bad – "It's pseudo-ham!"
That soured their stomachs bad and then bam,
They were no longer friends – they gonna slam!

Fighting under MMA rules, Marinate
My Artichokes, the set-up was first rate.
Spiffy Spam caps abounded in the crowd.
Hot Dog freaks squeaked mighty loud.

The round opened with a Hot Dog heave
That glanced off Spam's face, I do believe.
Spam's cans of supporters spit out commands.
Hot Dog would've done better if he had hands.

Experienced moving around a hot skillet,
The two island delicacies soon got to it.
Spam flattened Hot Dog who rolled out
And popped up like a brussels sprout.

The neat meats sweat grease all over the floor.
Poor referee Ketchup couldn't stand anymore.
When that bottle fell, the ring turned red as blood.
Spam and Hot Dog stood there in a tomato flood.

Unable to proceed, the fight was postponed.
At this time, the Heavyweight Champ is unknown.
Spam and Hot Dog didn't know what to do.
But after the fight, they were invited to a barbecue.

LITERARY NOOK

By BOB COLDEEN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

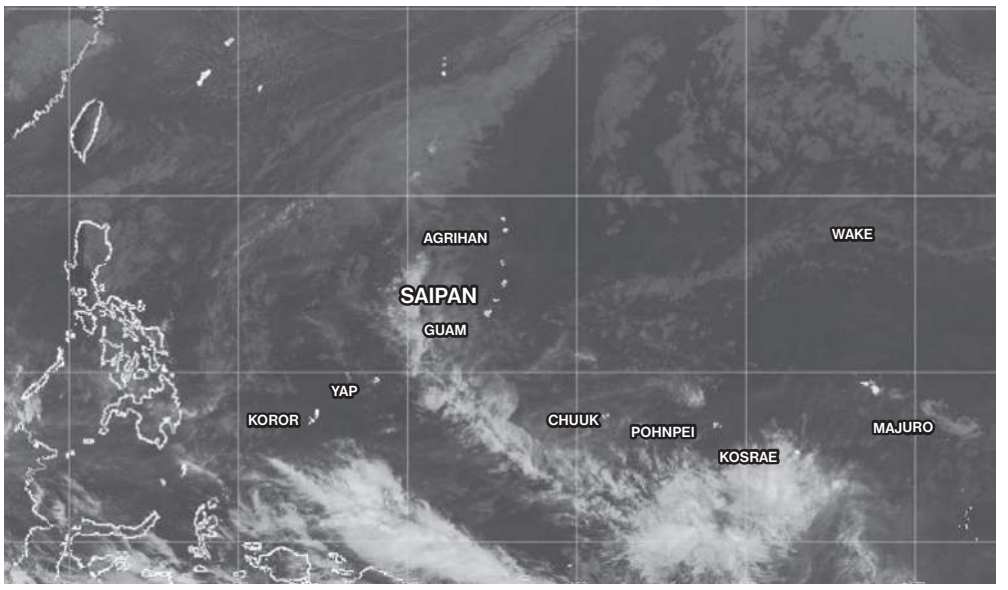
Bob Coldeen is a longtime TV journalist in the CNMI and is news director/reporter of KSPN 2.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
86º 76º	86º 76º	86º 76º	87º 77º	86º 76º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:39 AM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Latest satellite imagery and model guidance show clouds and showers have steadily decreased across the Marianas. Dry and breezy weather across Tinian and Saipan will trickle down to Guam/Rota by midday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	83º / 76º
Palau	Thunderstorm	85º / 77º
Yap	Thunderstorm	84º / 78º
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86º / 80º
Pohnpei	Showers	84º / 80º
Kosrae	Showers	84º / 80º
Majuro	Showers	85º / 79º

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Friday	6:45 AM	6:16 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	6:17 PM
Sunday	6:44 AM	6:17 PM
Monday	6:44 AM	6:18 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	11:28 AM	-
Friday	12:23 AM	12:14 PM	-
Saturday	1:22 AM	1:03 PM	-
Sunday	2:23 AM	1:56 PM	-
Monday	3:24 AM	2:53 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	75º / 59º
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	45º / 27º
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	68º / 64º
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	79º / 65º
London	Showers	48º / 39º
Los Angeles	Cloudy	66º / 54º
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86º / 73º
Melbourne	Sunny	81º / 55º
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78º / 68º
New York	Mostly Sunny	40º / 25º
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	52º / 37º
Paris	Showers	57º / 46º
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	48º / 30º
Rome	Cloudy	61º / 54º
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69º / 47º
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	42º / 22º
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	43º / 25º
Tokyo	Sunny	55º / 36º
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	44º / 29º

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:05 AM	High Tide	1.41
6:13 AM	Low Tide	0.43
12:32 PM	High Tide	1.79
7:37 PM	Low Tide	0.22

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:40am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

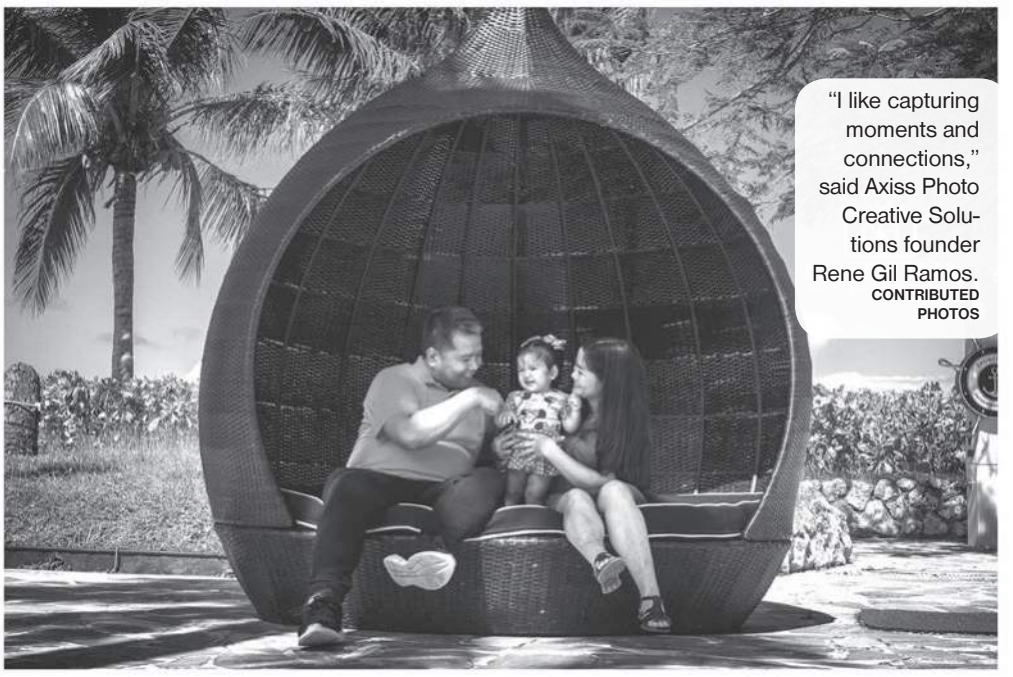
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

AXISS PHOTO CREATIVE SOLUTIONS:

Sharing what they see



"I like capturing moments and connections," said Axiss Photo Creative Solutions founder Rene Gil Ramos. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Axiss Photo Creative Solutions does lifestyle and traditional photography services.

Axiss Photo Creative Solutions founder Rene Gil Ramos has an eye for moments and these moments are captured with a click of his camera. After a decade of being a freelance photographer in Illinois, he is now on Saipan offering lifestyle and traditional photography services and sharing with us what he sees in photographs.

"Photography has always been my passion and long before there was social media, I have taken photographs of everyday moments in my life and assembled the printed photos chronologically into albums that make up bits and pieces of my life story. My life's work is creating photographs and albums that tell stories of people's lives…On Saipan, I started doing freelance photography for family and friends… [In] December last year, I met a few friends and decided to launch Axiss online," he said.

"When we were just planning on how we will do the business on Saipan, a business partner suggested in doing free family portraits for the community We know it has been difficult for the island because of the pandemic, especially in Christmas time…so my business partner posted this information on a Facebook group called 'Saipan Free.' Many people responded and we catered to the first 10 family reservations. When people keep on giving us good reviews and our audience in our page grew 300 times in a span of one month, we then decided to make packages and prices," he added.

Axxiss Photo Creative Solutions offers portraits that range from family, couple, or solo portraits that are mostly done outdoors.

They also do events and specializes in capturing pictures at weddings, birthday parties, concerts, graduations, etc.

"Currently, I am the main photographer who does most of the portrait, family photoshoot. However, we have another reserved photographer available to help out for big events like weddings and another one who is currently on training for videography in addition to our photography services," Ramos said.

"Our team is composed of photographer/videographer Irene Cristobal, session director and sales [executive] Candy Feliciano, and editor Jan Dionela…Over the years, I found the way to educate myself in photography is by investing time and money in learning the knick-knacks of the business. I studied and completed Adobe Photoshop course back in 2008 and I have been photographing portraits and events since then," Ramos added.

For more information, you can reach them at www.facebook.com/axissphoto.

According to Ramos, he always wants to capture connections more than highlight aesthetics. "I guess this is what I am aiming for the most, to show the love and joy of the people in front of my lens. They can look back at these as memories and it will give them that exact day when they were together and they were happy. I believe that on any given day, this will spark hope and happiness and knowing I was part of that, gives me extreme pleasure because is not every day that you get the chance to bring a smile to a person," he said.

"I want clients to see past the beauty and technicalities and that everyone has that delicate and unique beauty and perfection, sometimes a little angle and light can bring that to surface. What I want them to see is beyond that. I want them to see not only is their imperfections perfectly beautiful but also the joy and the love that surrounds the shot—their family, their loved ones, or their friends," he added.

Ramos said that to date, American Memorial Park is his favorite for outdoor photoshoots, "I guess it's really close to families. Not only that it is well maintained, offers many scenic background options, but also perhaps, the fact that families enjoy being there. Families enjoy picnics and outdoor fun when there so I guess that idea comforts them and eases their anxiety in posing in front of the lens because when we work with families, we want to make images for them that are meaningful, full of life and love, a bit emotive and raw."

For Ramos, photography is personal. Even though a lens separates him from his subjects, he takes time to know clients in a personal level and value them like they were his own family. "We give our photographs meaning by including literature and storytelling. If you can see in our page, we write mini-stories of our clients lives. They are not just clients to us, they are our friends who have unique and beautiful life stories to share.

We do this so at least offer hope and inspiration to the community. With everything that's been happening now, having hope is the most important thing…We are called Axiss after my two children, Axel and Katniss. To be able to do this is already a dream come true, the profit is just the icing on the cake," he added.

Axiss Photo Creative Solutions shoots daily. For more information, you can reach them at www.facebook.com/axissphoto.

BOG's Elm earns Certified Global Sanctions Specialist designation

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam's Jacinta Elm, Vice President/Director of BSA/AML has earned the Certified Global Sanctions Specialist (CGSS) designation from ACAMS, the Association of Certified Anti Money Laundering Specialists, and is the only such designee here on Guam.

Elm

Elm, with the Bank of Guam since 2002 is also a Certified Anti Money Laundering Specialist and a Certified Fraud Examiner. She has been with the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) Department since 2006, and is a graduate of Southern High and attended the University of Guam. Jacinta Elm was the 2017 Guam Small Business Administration Financial Services Champion of the Year and the 2018 Bank of Guam Supervisor of the Year.

ACAMS is the largest international membership organization for Anti-Financial Crime professionals which supports individuals and organizations who are dedicated to ending financial crime through thought leadership, continuing professional education and their "best-in-class" peer network. The CGSS is an ACAMS certification that equips an organization's workforce with a credential that represents a serious commitment to compliance with sanctions in a world of increasingly complex laws, regulations and policies.

For additional information, please contact Jackie Marati at jackie.marati@bankofguam.com. ***(PR)***

Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder, will step down as CEO

NEW YORK (AP)—Jeff Bezos, who founded Amazon as an online bookstore and built it into a shopping and entertainment behemoth, will step down later this year as CEO, a role he's had for nearly 30 years, to become executive chairman, the company announced Tuesday.

Bezos, 57, will be replaced in the summer by Andy Jassy, who runs Amazon's cloud-computing business.

In a blog post to employees, Bezos said he planned to focus on new products and early initiatives being developed at Amazon. He said he would have more time for side projects, including his space exploration company Blue Origin, his philanthropic initiatives and overseeing The Washington Post, which he owns.

Bezos, who is the company's biggest shareholder, will still have broad influence over Amazon.

"Jeff is really not going anywhere," Amazon's Chief Financial Officer Brian Olsavsky said in a call with reporters. "It's more of a restructuring of who's doing what."

Launched in 1995, Amazon was a pioneer of fast, free shipping that won over millions of shoppers who used the site to buy diapers, TVs and just about anything else. Under Bezos, Amazon also launched the first e-reader that gained mass acceptance, and its Echo listening device made voice assistants a common sight in living rooms.

As a child, Bezos was intrigued by computers and interested in building things, such as alarms he rigged in his parents' home. He got a degree in electrical engineering and computer science at Princeton University, and then worked at several Wall Street companies.

GameStop's stupefying stock rise doesn't hide its reality

NEW YORK (AP)—Behind GameStop's stock surge is the grim reality of its prospects: The video game retailer is floundering even as the industry around it is booming.

GameStop has been swept up in a battle between big-moneyed hedge funds betting against it and small investors trying to prop it up. That has caused GameStop's share price to soar despite the shaky financials underneath.

Flailing companies like AMC Entertainment and American Airlines have likewise enjoyed a stock surge, but GameStop has been the primary battleground between the Davids and the Goliaths. Shares rocketed 1,600% in the last three weeks, closing at $325 per share on Friday and giving GameStop a market cap of nearly $17 billion. Shares have since been cratering. On Tuesday, they fell 60% to close at $90.

Many investors fully understand the contradiction between GameStop's stock price and its business fundamentals. But for those who imagine it to be the next Tesla or Amazon, the truth is: It's likely not. The company's quarterly report issued in September showed another steep quarterly sales decline as it struggles to adapt to the rise of mobile gaming and digital downloads that have rendered its more than 5,000 stores obsolete, even more so during the pandemic.

Nation

Biden signs immigration orders as Congress awaits more

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden on Tuesday signed a second spate of orders to undo his predecessor's immigration policies, demonstrating the powers of the White House and its limitations without support from Congress.

His orders on family separation, border security and legal immigration bring to nine the number of executive actions on immigration during his first two weeks in office. With proposed legislation to give legal status and a path to citizenship to all of the estimated 11 million people in the country who don't have it, Biden has quickly taken aim at many of former President Donald Trump's sweeping changes to deter immigration, both legal and illegal, and established a vision that is likely to far outlast his tenure if he's able to muster enough support in a deeply divided Congress.

Biden rescinded some Trump actions and laid a foundation for more far-reaching repeals depending on the outcome of policy reviews over the next few months.

"I'm not making new law. I'm eliminating bad policy," he said during a signing ceremony.

Alejandro Mayorkas, who was sworn in as Homeland Security secretary after his nomination was confirmed Tuesday by the Senate, will lead a task force on family separation, focused largely on reuniting parents and children who remain apart. It is unclear exactly how many, but about 5,500 children have been identified in court documents as having been separated during Trump's presidency, including about 600 whose parents have yet to be found by a court-appointed committee.

"We're going to work to undo the moral and national shame of the previous administration," Biden said.

The review will address the possibility of legal status in the United States for separated families and providing mental health services.

The American Civil Liberties Union, which sued to reunite families, has asked the administration for legal status in the United States for all of the thousands of families that have been separated, as well as financial compensation for those families and attorneys at government expense.

A review of border security will include a policy that makes asylum-seekers wait in Mexican border cities for hearings in U.S. immigration court. It is a step toward fulfilling a campaign pledge to end the "Remain in Mexico" policy, known officially as Migrant Protection Protocols, which enrolled nearly 70,000 asylum-seekers since it began in January 2019. Biden asked for "a phased strategy for the safe and orderly entry into the United States" of those already enrolled who are waiting in Mexico for a judge to decide their cases.

Biden ended a policy that held asylum-seekers in Customs and Border Protection custody with virtually no access to attorneys while their claims were quickly decided.

AP
In this Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021 file photo, President Joe Biden stands during a performance of the national anthem, during a virtual Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service in the State Dinning Room of the White House, in Washington.

He ordered reviews of a nationwide expansion of fast-track deportation authority and of agreements with Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras for the U.S. to reject asylum applicants and instead send them to those Central American countries with an opportunity to seek protection there.

His order on legal immigration seeks ways to reduce backlogs and barriers to citizenship and considers scrapping Trump's "public charge rule," which makes it more difficult for people who receive government benefits to obtain green cards.

Biden didn't address a freeze on many temporary work visas and green cards while the economy recovers from a pandemic, as some expected.

"That's a pretty big gap for them not to take action on those visa bans because the impact is so dramatic and significant," said Greg Chen, director of government relations for the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

While immediate changes were limited, the impact of executive orders that Trump issued his first week in office didn't start to become apparent until a month later when Homeland Security issued detailed enforcement priorities. Those orders laid a foundation for many other of his administration's hundreds of immigration moves that followed.

House Dems make case for conviction; Trump denies charges

WASHINGTON (AP)—Donald Trump endangered the lives of all members of Congress when he aimed a mob of supporters "like a loaded cannon" at the U.S. Capitol, House Democrats said Tuesday in making their most detailed case yet for why the former president should be convicted and permanently barred from office. Trump denied the allegations through his lawyers and called the trial unconstitutional.

The dueling filings offer the first public glimpse of the arguments that will be presented to the Senate beginning next week. The impeachment trial represents a remarkable reckoning with the violence in the Capitol last month, which the senators witnessed firsthand, and with Trump's presidency overall. Held in the very chamber where the insurrectionists stood on Jan. 6, it will pit Democratic demands for a final measure of accountability against the desire of many Republicans to turn the page and move on.

The impeachment trial, Trump's second, begins in earnest on Feb. 9.

The Democratic legal brief forcefully linked Trump's baseless efforts to overturn the results of the presidential election to the deadly riot at the Capitol, saying he bears "unmistakable" blame for actions that threatened the underpinnings of American democracy. It argued that he must be found guilty on a charge of inciting the siege. And it used evocative language to conjure the day's chaos, when "terrified members were trapped in the chamber" and called loved ones "for fear they would not survive."

"His conduct endangered the life of every single member of Congress, jeopardized the peaceful transition of power and line of succession, and compromised our national security," the Democratic managers of the impeachment case wrote. "This is precisely the sort of constitutional offense that warrants disqualification from federal office."

The Democrats' filing made clear their plan to associate Trump's words with the resulting violence, tracing his efforts to subvert democracy to when he first said last summer that he would not accept the election results and then through the November contest and his many failed attempts to challenge the results in court. When those efforts failed, the Democrats wrote, "he turned to improper and abusive means of staying in power," specifically by launching a pressure campaign aimed at state election officials, the Justice Department and Congress.

"The only honorable path at that point was for President Trump to accept the results and concede his electoral defeat. Instead, he summoned a mob to Washington, exhorted them into a frenzy, and aimed them like a loaded cannon down Pennsylvania Avenue," the Democrats wrote in an 80-page document.

The Democrats cited his unsuccessful efforts to sway Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger and former Attorney General William Barr. Trump then became "fixated" on Jan. 6, the managers wrote. They note that many of his supporters, including the Proud Boys—who Trump told to "stand back and stand by" at a September debate—were already primed for violence.

"Given all that, the crowd which assembled on January 6 unsurprisingly included many who were armed, angry, and dangerous—and poised on a hair trigger for President Trump to confirm that they indeed had to "fight" to save America from an imagined conspiracy," the Democrats wrote.

Biden, Yellen say GOP virus aid too small, Democrats push on

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden panned a Republican alternative to his $1.9 trillion COVID rescue plan as insufficient as Senate Democrats pushed ahead, voting to launch a process that could approve his sweeping rescue package on their own, if Republicans refuse to support it.

Biden and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen joined the Democratic senators for a private virtual meeting Tuesday, both declaring the Republicans' $618 billion offer was too small. They urged big fast action to stem the pandemic crisis and economic fallout.

As the White House reaches for a bipartisan bill, Democrats marshaled their ever-slim Senate majority, voting 50-49, to start a lengthy process for approving Biden's bill with or without GOP support. The goal is to have COVID-19 relief approved by March, when extra unemployment assistance and other pandemic aid expires.

"President Biden spoke about the need for Congress to respond boldly and quickly," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said after the lunch meeting.

"If we did a package that small, we'd be mired in the COVID crisis for years."

The swift action from Democrats on Capitol Hill underscores the urgency of delivering Biden's top legislative priority even as talks are progressing privately between Republicans and the White House, as well as with centrist Democrats, on potential changes to the package to win over broader bipartisan support.

Biden framed his views during the virtual lunch meeting with Democrats by talking about the need not to forget working and middle-class families — even those like nurses and pipefitters making $150,000 for a family of four — who are straining during the crisis, according to a person granted anonymity to discuss the private call.

The night before, Biden met with 10 Republican senators pitching their $618 billion alternative, and let them know it was insufficient to meet the country's needs. The president made it clear that he won't delay aid in hopes of winning GOP support.

While no compromise was reached during the late Monday session, White House talks with Republicans are privately underway.

Asia

Myanmar's Suu Kyi detained again—without old support

BANGKOK (AP)—A day after Myanmar's military pulled off a well-choreographed coup, the country's civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, finds herself right back where she was just over a decade ago—under house arrest.

But this time, her standoff with the military comes after she has sorely disappointed many once-staunch supporters in the international community by cozying up to the country's generals while in power. Leaders in the West are denouncing her detention, of course—but they no longer view the Nobel laureate as a paragon of democratic leadership.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won last November's elections by a landslide, catching the generals by surprise. They immediately cried voter fraud—an allegation the country's election commission has dismissed—and proved Monday who really controls the country, detaining Suu Kyi and other top leaders under the cover of darkness, just hours before a new session of Parliament was set to convene.

With flights grounded and communications largely cut, Myanmar plunged back into isolation and darkness, ending 10 years of new freedoms and quasi-civilian rule that the Obama administration held up as a beacon of nascent democracy. The military-owned Myawaddy TV said the country would be under a one-year state of emergency.

Now, it's not clear who can lead the country out of the wilderness, with Suu Kyi's reputation abroad badly tarnished.

"I believe that Aung San Suu Kyi has been an accomplice with the military," said veteran U.S. diplomat Bill Richardson. "I hope she realizes that her compact with the devil has boomeranged against her, and that she will now take the right stand on behalf of democracy" and become a true advocate for human rights.

"But if she doesn't step aside," he said, "I think the NLD needs to find new leaders."

Suu Kyi, the daughter of independence hero and father of the nation, spent almost 15 years under house arrest before her release in 2010. Her tough stand against the junta turned her into a symbol of peaceful resistance against oppressors—and won her the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize.

During her years of confinement, a parade of foreign diplomats, human rights advocates and Nobel laureates streamed into her lakeside villa, demanding the hardline military free the elegant woman known as "The Lady," who often wears flowers in her hair.

But since her release and return to politics, Suu Kyi has been heavily criticized for the political gamble she made: showing deference to the military while ignoring and, at times, even defending atrocities—most notably a 2017 crackdown on Rohingya Muslims that the United States and others have labeled genocide.

When she disputed allegations at the U.N. International Court of Justice in at The Hague just over a year ago that army personnel killed Rohingya civilians, torched houses and raped women, fellow Nobel Prize winner Jody Williams saw it as a betrayal.

"Beyond rhetoric during election campaigns, what does she really believe in? What does democracy mean to her?" asked Williams, who was honored in 1997 for her work to ban landmines.

Suu Kyi called such criticism unfair, insisting that she had never considered herself a human rights icon, and that that title had been thrust upon her. She had always been, she argued, a politician.

Japan concerned over EU COVID-19 vaccine supply uncertainty

TOKYO (AP)—Japan is concerned about delays in the distribution of European-made coronavirus vaccines, an official said Tuesday, as the country struggles to obtain enough doses to allow it to host the Olympics this summer.

Taro Kono, the Cabinet minister in charge of COVID-19 vaccines, said the EU's lack of clarity in its supply schedule is affecting Japan's preparations.

"Our vaccine supply schedule has not been finalized even now," Kono said.

Last month, the EU announced export controls on coronavirus vaccines made in the bloc under a so-called transparency mechanism requiring producers to prioritize existing contracts with the EU.

The Pfizer vaccine is expected to be the first to receive Japanese government approval later this month. Kono said some Pfizer vaccines are produced in the EU and subject to the region's vaccine export control system.

Officials at local municipalities are scrambling to prepare for the massive vaccination project, but Kono said he hasn't been able to provide them with specific timeline.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said Tuesday that he hopes to begin inoculations using the Pfizer vaccine in mid-February—earlier than the initially planned late-February—starting with medical workers, elderly people and others with underlying health conditions.

The general public is not expected to begin being vaccinated until around June, making it difficult to obtain "herd immunity" ahead of the Olympics in July, especially in a country known for vaccine skepticism.

Suga cited careful preparations, clinical testing and the approval process as reasons for the delay in vaccinations.

Japan has also signed agreements with two other foreign pharmaceutical makers—AstraZeneca of Britain and Moderna Inc. of the United States—to provide a total of more than 310 million vaccine doses this year.

Japan is to receive 144 million doses from Pfizer, 120 million from AstraZeneca and the rest from Moderna. About 90 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine are to be produced in Japan by a Japanese company under a licensing deal, Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato said.

During online Japan-EU trade talks Monday night, Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi raised concerns about the vaccine export controls and urged EU officials to ensure a stable supply for Japan, the Foreign Ministry said.

EU Executive Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis told Motegi that he understands Tokyo's concerns and the EU will do its utmost to achieve smooth vaccine exports based on existing contracts and favorable Japan-EU relations, the ministry said.

Suga has promised to secure enough vaccines to cover Japan's entire population of 127 million by June. He said Japan is seeking to achieve a safe and secure Olympics with or without vaccines.

World

Moscow court orders jail term for Navalny

MOSCOW (AP)—A Moscow court on Tuesday ordered Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny to prison for more than 2 1/2 years, finding that he violated the terms of his probation while recuperating in Germany from nerve-agent poisoning. The ruling ignited protests in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Navalny, who is the most prominent critic of President Vladimir Putin, had denounced the proceedings as a vain attempt by the Kremlin to scare millions of Russians into submission.

After the verdict that was announced about 8 p.m., protesters converged on areas of central Moscow and gathered on St. Petersburg's main avenue, Nevsky Prospekt.

Helmeted riot police grabbed demonstrators without obvious provocation and put them in police vehicles. The Meduza website showed video of police roughly pulling a passenger and driver out of a taxi.

The ruling came despite massive protests across Russia over the past two weekends and Western calls to free the 44-year-old anti-corruption campaigner.

AP

In this handout photo taken from a footage provided by Moscow City Court, Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny shows a heart symbol standing in the cage during a hearing to a motion from the Russian prison service to convert the suspended sentence of Navalny from the 2014 criminal conviction into a real prison term in the Moscow City Court in Moscow, Russia, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021.

"We reiterate our call for the Russian government to immediately and unconditionally release Mr. Navalny, as well as the hundreds of other Russian citizens wrongfully detained in recent weeks for exercising their rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly," U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said after the ruling.

The protests lasted until about 1 a.m. About 650 people were arrested, according to OVD-Info, a group that monitors political arrests.

The prison sentence stems from a 2014 embezzlement conviction that Navalny has rejected as fabricated and politically motivated.

Navalny was arrested Jan. 17 upon returning from his five-month convalescence in Germany from the attack, which he has blamed on the Kremlin. Russian authorities deny any involvement. Despite tests by several European labs, Russian authorities said they have no proof he was poisoned.

UK tests house-to-house in hunt for new COVID-19 variant

LONDON (AP)—England has begun house-by-house COVID-19 testing in some communities as authorities try to snuff out a new variant of the coronavirus before it spreads widely and undermines a nationwide vaccination program.

Authorities want to reach the 80,000 residents of eight areas where the variant, first identified in South Africa, is known to be spreading because a handful of cases have been detected among people who have had no contact with the country or anyone who traveled there.

Officials are dispatching home testing kits and mobile testing units in an effort to reach every resident of those communities. It is "critical" for everyone in these areas to stay at home unless travel is absolutely essential, Health Secretary Matt Hancock said.

"Our mission must be to stop its spread altogether and break those chains of transmission," Hancock told the House of Commons on Tuesday.

Public health officials are concerned about the variant first identified in South Africa because it contains a mutation of the virus' characteristic spike protein that existing vaccines target. The mutation may mean the vaccines offer less protection against the variant.

As the door-to-door testing drive got underway, Public Health England also said scientists had discovered the same spike protein mutation in 11 cases involving another variant that is now the most prevalent form of the virus in England. The mutation had not previously been detected in the so-called Kent variant, named for the English county where it was first identified.

Britain's government announced in December that the country had to introduce tougher restrictions to control the rapid spread of the Kent variant, which first was discovered a few months earlier in southeast England. Authorities were alarmed by how fast it spread, saying it was more contagious than existing coronavirus variants.

No conclusive evidence has emerged to show the Kent variant causes more serious COVID-19 cases or deaths. Dozens of nations around the world imposed bans on travel from the U.K. as cases multiplied in England, but the variant nevertheless has turned up in numerous countries.

While viruses mutate constantly, most of the changes cause little concern. But scientists are closely tracking mutations in the virus that causes COVID-19 to make sure they quickly identify variants of concern.

Dr. Julian Tang, a clinical virologist at the University of Leicester, said recent discovery of the spike protein mutation in the Kent variant was a "worrying development, though not entirely unexpected."

Environment

#Plant500Marianas extended until Feb. 14

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Express your love for the environment, or have an unforgettable eco-conscious date this Valentine's Day, by planting a tree and taking part in the #Plant500Marianas challenge, organized by Miss Northern Marianas Earth Maria Lael Terlaje and Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto, with the Lady Diann Torres Foundation.

The tree planting challenge, with a goal of planting 500 trees all over the island, where, for every tree that gets planted, a dollar will be donated to the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance, has been extended up until Feb. 14.

To participate, all you have to do is plant a tree, take your photo with the tree, and post it on Facebook and Instagram, with #plant500marianas.

» Show your love by planting a tree

Then, tag and follow the social media accounts of Miss Northern Marianas Earth (@missnorthernmarianasearth), Miss Northern Marianas (@missnorthernmarianas), and the Lady Diann Torres Foundation (@ladydianntorres).

Launched in November last year, over 200 trees have now been already planted. Aside from individual volunteers, among those who have joined the cause are 4th and 5th grade students from the Oleai Elementary School, who recently planted 50 trees.

"Thank you to the 4th and 5th graders for their hard work and enthusiasm in planting 50 trees on Tuesday [Jan. 26] for our Plant 500 Marianas Project. The initiative you have taken in this project is a step towards a healthier planet and an environmentally conscious community," Sasamoto shared.

Terlaje also thanked Oleai Elementary School and their Youth Advisory Panel for participating in the #Plant-500Marianas initiative.

"Working with our community and getting the youth excited to be involved, reminds me that there are so many people who strive to see our island prosper… It was so much fun working with this panel and seeing their excitement every time a tree was planted," Terlaje said.

The two beauty queens and environmental advocates also expressed appreciation to CNMI Forestry's Pedro Tudela, for helping educate the students on how to plant trees, as well as its benefits.

Miss Earth NMI also appealed to everyone to plant trees, saying, "Let's do this! In your home, school, or business, we can all work together and make this initiative a success."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Oleai Elementary School students plant a tree last week with Miss Northern Marianas Shannon Sasamoto for the #Plant500Marianas campaign. The school's 4th and 5th grade students planted 50 trees, where for every tree, $1 will be donated by the Lady Diann Torres Foundation to the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miss Northern Marianas Earth Maria Lael Terlaje poses with the team from the Northern Marianas College, who planted the sprouted coconut in honor of NMC's 40th anniversary.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miss Northern Marianas Shannon Sasamoto is joined by her Stellar Marianas family where they planted a total of 10 trees at the Tanapag Beach Park for the #Plant500Marianas campaign.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. sponsored and participated in the planting of trees by the Joeten Kiyu Public Library in Susupe, to support the #Plant500Marianas campaign.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI First Lady Diann Torres helps plant a tree for the #Plant-500Marianas campaign. The LDTF Foundation will donate a dollar to the Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance for every tree planted on island until Feb. 14.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Junior Demapan planted a tree on Christmas Day to support the #Plant500Marianas campaign. To also participate, plant a tree, take your photo with the tree, and post it on Facebook and Instagram, with #plant500marianas.

Aside from Oleai Elementary School, the Northern Marianas College, Stellar Marianas, Salty Skin Pacific, Pacifica Insurance, and the CNMI Office of Planning and Development have also participated in the campaign.

Join the cleanup at Marine Beach this Saturday

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality is inviting community volunteers to join the beach cleanup at the Marine Beach in Kagman this Saturday, Feb. 6, from 8am to 10am.

The cleanup, organized one Saturday of every month by BECQ's Cleanup Brigade, brings together volunteers from within the organization and the community, to clean up a pre-identified area for two hours, where afterwards, the trash that gets collected is hauled away for disposal at the Marpi landfill.

Last year, in February, the Cleanup Brigade collected about 760 lbs of trash during the cleanup, also in Marine Beach.

For more information about waste management, or to volunteer in the community cleanups, contact the BECQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(Iva Maurin)***

Life & Style

Capt. Tom Moore, WWII vet whose walk cheered UK, dies at 100

By DANICA KIRKA
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON (AP)—Capt. Tom Moore, the World War II veteran who walked into the hearts of a nation in lockdown as he shuffled up and down his garden to raise money for health care workers, has died after testing positive for COVID-19. He was 100.

His family announced his death on Twitter, posting a picture of him behind his walker in a happy moment, ready for an adventure.

"The last year of our father's life was nothing short of remarkable. He was rejuvenated and experienced things he'd only ever dreamed of," the family's statement said. "Whilst he'd been in so many hearts for just a short time, he was an incredible father and grandfather, and he will stay alive in our hearts forever."

Captain Tom, as he became known in newspaper headlines and TV interviews, set out to raise 1,000 pounds for Britain's National Health Service by walking 100 laps of his backyard. But his quest went viral and caught the imagination of millions stuck at home during the first wave of the pandemic. Donations poured in from across Britain and as far away as the United States and Japan, raising some 33 million pounds ($40 million).

For three weeks in April, fans were greeted with daily videos of Captain Tom, stooped with age, doggedly pushing his walker in the garden. But it was his sunny attitude during a dark moment that inspired people to look beyond illness and loss.

"Please always remember, tomorrow will be a good day," Moore said in an interview during his walk, uttering the words that became his trademark.

In this Friday, July 17, 2020 file photo, Capt. Sir Thomas Moore poses for the media after receiving his knighthood from Britain's Queen Elizabeth, during a ceremony at Windsor Castle in Windsor, England. AP

When Captain Tom finished his 100th lap on April 16, a military honor guard lined the path. The celebration continued on his birthday a few days later, when two World War II-era fighter planes flew overhead in tribute. Moore, a plaid blanket over his shoulders, pumped a fist as they roared past.

In July, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in a socially distanced ceremony at Windsor Castle, west of London. The 94-year-old monarch used an impossibly long sword to confer the honor as Moore, wearing his wartime medals on his chest, leaned on his walker, beamed and became Sir Tom.

"I have been overwhelmed by the many honors I have received over the past weeks, but there is simply nothing that can compare to this," he tweeted after the ceremony. "I am overwhelmed with pride and joy."

Queen Elizabeth II plans a private message of condolence to the family, Buckingham Palace said.

"Her Majesty very much enjoyed meeting Capt. Sir Tom and his family at Windsor last year," the palace said in a statement. "Her thoughts, and those of the Royal Family, are with them, recognizing the inspiration he provided for the whole nation and others across the world."

Painting looted by Nazis to be returned to Jewish heirs

BERLIN (AP)—A commission in Germany has ruled that a painting by expressionist Erich Heckel that is in a German art museum was likely unlawfully obtained under the Nazis and should be returned to the heirs of a Jewish historian who once owned it, officials said Tuesday.

Heckel's "Geschwister," or "Siblings," was owned by Jewish historian Max Fischer until 1934, the year before he fled Germany to avoid Nazi persecution, according to Baden-Wuerttemberg's state commission on Nazi looted art.

The 1913 oil painting ended up back with Heckel, and the artist donated it to the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe museum in 1967.

The state commission said it could not be determined when and under which circumstances Heckel came into possession of the piece, sometime between January 1934 and January 1944.

The commission said that given the circumstances, however, it had to be assumed that Fischer, who immigrated to the United States, lost possession of the painting due to Nazi persecution. It ordered the artwork returned to his heirs.

Boseman earns 2 nominations for NAACP Image Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—With his final two performances, the late Chadwick Boseman earned two NAACP Image Awards nominations Tuesday, while "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" could make its presence felt at next month's ceremony.

Boseman scored nods for his work in the Netflix films "Da 5 Bloods" and "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom." The actor, who starred in the blockbuster Marvel film "Black Panther," died at 43 last year after privately battling colon cancer.

"Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" came away with nine nominations. The film delves into the story of blues singer Ma Rainey, who joins her band during a turbulent recording session at a Chicago music studio in 1927.

The nominees were announced on the organization's Instagram page by Chloe Bailey, Anika Noni Rose and Nicco Annan, along with T.C. Carson and Erika Alexander.

Netflix emerged with a leading 48 nominations. Besides the two films Boseman starred in, the streaming giant released other projects like "Bridgerton" and "#blackAF."

Golden Globes nominations Wednesday could belong to Netflix

NEW YORK (AP)—Whether anyone will be attending the Golden Globes in person remains uncertain and improbable. But nominations to the 78th Globes will be announced Wednesday, nevertheless.

Hollywood's strange and largely virtual awards season lacks the usual kind of buzz and red-carpet glamour that the Hollywood Foreign Press Association annually feasts on. More than perhaps any other award show, the Globes depend on a cavalcade of stars—something that won't materialize when the awards are handed out Feb. 28 in a ceremony hosted by Tina Fey and Amy Poehler.

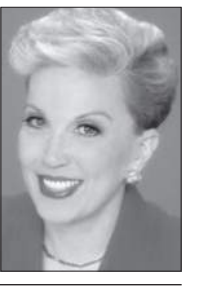
On Tuesday, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association said the Globes—typically a bubbly dinner gathering with flowing drinks—will be held bicoastally for the first time. Fey will host live from New York's Rainbow Room and Poehler will host from the awards' normal home, the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif. It's expected that nominees will be appear from locations around the world.

Disconnect regarding faith may herald couple's demise

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



DEAR ABBY: I have been dating this guy seriously for a year. We have talked about marriage and we were even looking at rings. Due to certain recent events, I have come to realize that my hope for his Christianity to grow stronger is probably never going to happen. I love this man with all my heart, but I also need a husband who will pray with me, have a heart for God, who will want to go to church and make decisions by praying and leaning on God.

We have talked about this and what my needs are, but he's not sure if he will get there. Do I hold on and hope through my actions and life, he will learn how to walk with God fully, or should I let him go and try to find someone else?

BROKENHEARTED BELIEVER

DEAR BELIEVER: If you can't accept this man just the way he is, let him go. You shouldn't marry anyone hoping to change him because it wouldn't be fair to either of you. If faith is your No. 1 priority, it would be better for both of you if you look further for a life partner.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My friend "Gina" and I have known each other for many years. The other day she got into a heated discussion on Facebook with several other people we've known for years. It was about politics. When I read her post, I was shocked. She belittled and bullied those who didn't share her opinion. I have since deleted my FB account because I don't want to see such hatred. What do I tell her when she asks why I'm no longer on social media?

SOCIAL MEDIA DISTANCED

DEAR SOCIAL: Tell Gina the truth. Say you deleted your account because you were shocked when you saw people with differing political opinions being bullied and demeaned, which you found shocking and offensive. If she's foolish enough to push you for more detail, tell her how her post affected you. It's shameful that adults in this day and age cannot calmly discuss their differences without resorting to those tactics.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am torn between two guys. I have known the first guy for a year, and we had some ups and downs. Six months ago he had a heart attack, but he pulled through, thank God. But since then, things have been very hard. Our relationship went sour and we broke up.

I met the second guy online a month ago. He seems very sweet and down to earth and treats me like a princess. The first guy and I ended up talking again, and the problem is, I'm still in love with him. I think both of them are wonderful and I don't know what decision to make. Please help me.

CHOICES, CHOICES IN DELAWARE

DEAR CHOICES: Before making any decision, it's important you fully understand why your relationship with Guy No. 1 went sour after his heart attack. Could it be related to his near-death experience? You need to have all the facts before jumping back into a romance with him.

You haven't known Guy No. 2 long enough to really know who he is yet. Do not pull the plug on this one until you have more answers than you were able to put in your letter to me.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

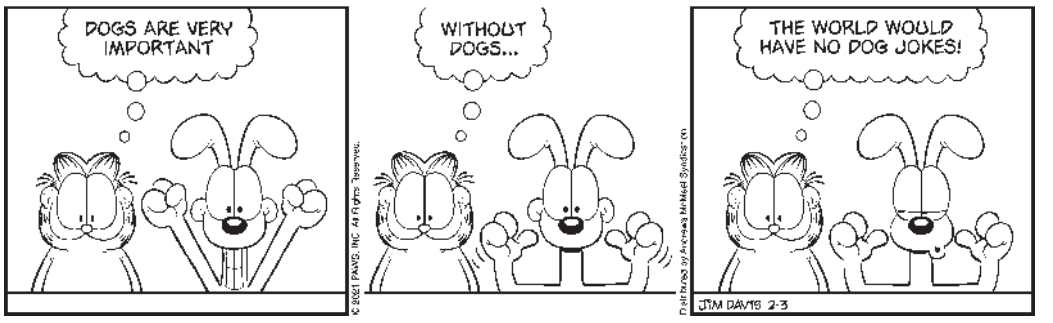
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

AUGHHH! A SNOW SNAKE'S GOT ME!
HORRIBLE INNER TEETH ON ITS SEPARATELY MOVING UPPER JAW BONES ARE PULLING ME DOWN ITS FRIGID GULLET! RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!
AT LEAST I HAVE A LIFE...UNLIKE SOME WEIRDOS I KNOW.
I SUPPOSE IF I HAD TWO X CHROMOSOMES, I'D FEEL HOSTILE TOO.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

AT THIS POINT THE COFFEE GOES THROUGH MY SECRET PROCESS.
SSS
WHAT'S THE SECRET PROCESS?
I CAN'T TELL YOU, SO IF YOU'RE CAPTURED BY SPIES, YOU CAN HONESTLY TELL THEM YOU DON'T KNOW IT.
WAIT. COFFEE SPIES?
I'VE SAID TOO MUCH. NOD AND WALK BY LIKE YOU DON'T KNOW ME.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

GINA, WHAT IS IT THAT WOMEN LOOK FOR MOST IN A GUY?
FUNNY... GOOD-LOOKING... FINANCIALLY STABLE...
OKAY, LET'S TRY THIS... WHAT ARE THE LEAST OBJECTIONABLE QUALITIES WOMEN LOOK FOR IN A GUY?

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

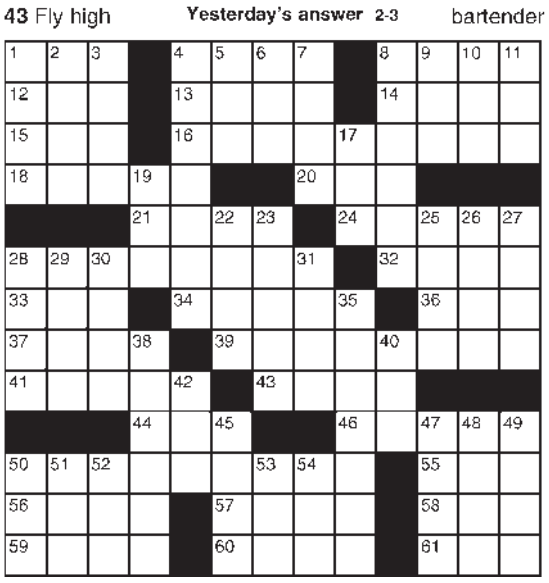
ACROSS
1 That girl
4 Nursery cry
8 Cave creatures
12 Light (Lat.)
13 Panache
14 Squad
15 Flamenco cheer
16 "Shucks!"
18 Pricey handbag brand
20 Revue segment
21 Crooned
24 Gets better
28 "Take a chance!"
32 Laugh-a-minute
33 "Caught ya!"
34 Pitchers
36 Calendar box
37 Kitten calls
39 "Marathon Man" query
41 Trousers
43 Fly high
44 Kanga's kid
46 Alpine air?
50 "Stop obsessing over this"
55 Green prefix
56 Begged
57 Isaac's eldest
58 To and —
59 Faction
60 Genie's home
61 "Tasty!"

DOWN
1 Trudge
2 Video-streaming site
3 Corp. bigwig
4 Act as a go-between
5 Mode lead-in
6 Scratch
7 "Downton Abbey" role
8 Bread spread
9 Carrier to Tokyo
10 Up to
11 Cardinal cap letters
17 German pronoun
19 Hit CBS series
22 "— lay me down ..."
23 Stab
25 Verdi opera
26 Rye buy
27 Eyelid woe
28 Pack (down)
29 Mother of Zeus
30 Show ennui
31 Small combo
35 Doesn't go to bed
38 Long step
40 "No seats"
42 Drunkard
45 Autobahn auto
47 Challenge
48 Beige
49 Appear ominously
50 Vinyl records
51 Yalie
52 Rocker Nugent
53 Simile center
54 "Cheers" bartender

Solution time: 23 mins.

T	A	M	E		R		M	S		C	A	D
L	I	A	M		A	C	A	I		A	H	E
C	R	I	B	S	H	E	E	I		R	O	N
			L	O	S	T		T	E	D	D	Y
A	R	C	E	D			T	E	S	S		
S	I	A	M		S	E	A	R	C	H	E	D
I	S	R		D	E	M	O	S		A	P	E
S	E	G	M	E	N	I	S		C	R	E	W
		O	C	P	S			D	U	K	E	S
H	O	S	N			S	O	A	R			
U	G	H		C	A	N	D	Y	S	H	O	P
M	L	I			R	U	E		O	M	A	H
P	E	P		S	I	B	S		H	O	H	Y

Yesterday's answer 2-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Isla Fisher, 45; Nathan Lane, 65; Morgan Fairchild, 71; Blythe Danner, 78.

Happy Birthday: Distance yourself from unpredictable people and situations this year. Make your aim to explore new interests, and align yourself with people who share your goals. The world is your oyster if you position yourself for success. Take the initiative to make things happen and to enjoy what life has to offer. Be the master of your destiny. Romance is featured. Your numbers are 6, 14, 25, 28, 34, 39, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Be patient with partners. Don't let your emotions lead to an argument that has a lasting effect on a relationship with someone you love or need in your corner. Pay attention, do a good job and choose love over discord. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Talks will be explosive if you aren't mindful of what others want. If you don't relish flak, work on projects that you can do by yourself. Focus on creativity, be inventive and keep moving until you finish what you start. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Emotions will rise to the surface. Learn from the experiences you encountered when dealing with others to help avoid a similar outcome. Be helpful, and take care of unfinished business to avoid problems with institutions. Make romance and love your preferences. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Connect with someone who shares your interests or concerns. Don't make a financial donation that you cannot afford. You'll get more in return if you contribute your skills, time or experience. Don't take a risk with your health. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* An unexpected financial change will have emotional implications. Look at every angle, and figure out the best way to make the most of a situation that you cannot alter. How you handle matters will make a difference to the outcome. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Don't rely on others to make a positive change. Do the work yourself, and take the credit for the outcome. Refuse to let a personal matter stand between you and what you are trying to achieve. Don't give in to temptation. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Problems at home will develop if you haven't spent enough time nurturing personal relationships or taking care of domestic matters. Examine your financial situation, and contribute just as much if not more as those who share expenses with you. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* A change heading in your direction will make you feel unsure about life, love and your prospects. Don't ignore what's happening. Do your part, and rid yourself of undue stress that stops you from living life peacefully. Take care of unfinished business. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Use your connections to get ahead. Pay off debts and collect money owed. A change in the way you handle your money and the way you live will give you a boost of energy that will lead to greater happiness. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Put more energy into your surroundings and domestic relationships. Be attentive, and make personal changes that will make life less stressful for those you love. Learn from your mistakes, and be more accommodating in order to gain respect. Romance is favored. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Read the fine print before you make a decision. Someone you least expect may try to outsmart you. Be respectful, but speak up if you think you spot a mistake. Keeping the peace will pay off. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* A change of plans will play out in your favor. Don't complain about something that may not occur. Keep a low profile, do things your way and present what you have to offer once you are satisfied with what you achieve. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charming, sensitive and kind. You are intelligent and unique.

1 star: *Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes.* **2 stars:** *You can accomplish, but don't rely on others.* **3 stars:** *Focus and you'll reach your goals.* **4 stars:** *Aim high; start new projects.* **5 stars:** *Nothing can stop you; go for gold.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		6	5			4	9	
	7				2			5
5					9			8
9						3	7	1
6								9
4	1	7						2
2			8					4
3			1				5	
	4	5			3	8		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/03

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

3	8	9	7	2	6	1	5	4
2	6	1	3	5	4	8	9	7
4	5	7	8	9	1	6	3	2
6	2	8	5	7	3	4	1	9
5	7	4	9	1	2	3	6	8
9	1	3	4	6	8	2	7	5
1	4	5	6	8	9	7	2	3
8	9	6	2	3	7	5	4	1
7	3	2	1	4	5	9	8	6

Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

WHAT'S IN YOUR COLD CELLAR? Solution: 4 letters

P	N	J	A	M	Ⓢ	N	S	E	G	A	S	U	A	S
H	I	O	N	I	Ⓞ	N	S	S	S	P	I	E	S	S
C	S	N	S	M	Ⓓ	W	T	L	R	A	R	H	I	H
A	R	I	E	I	Ⓐ	U	A	E	S	A	L	S	T	E
S	E	L	D	A	N	S	S	P	A	C	E	A	E	L
H	P	G	R	A	P	E	F	R	U	I	T	U	M	V
E	P	I	E	I	R	P	V	E	C	H	C	Q	S	I
W	E	P	N	V	C	E	L	L	E	E	C	S	S	N
S	P	R	E	S	A	O	S	E	B	B	L	T	I	G
C	U	R	E	D	R	N	G	R	A	P	E	S	E	O
T	A	E	M	A	R	A	A	R	O	E	E	A	T	K
J	U	I	C	E	O	B	P	A	B	H	K	A	N	E
A	U	S	W	A	T	E	R	B	S	E	M	I	L	S
R	E	G	L	E	S	S	U	R	B	O	T	T	L	E
S	E	H	S	I	D	A	R	U	T	A	B	A	G	A

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Area, Barbecue, Barrel, Beans, Beets, Bottle, Brussel, Carrots, Cashews, Cured, Escarole, Grapefruit, Grapes, Horseradish, Items, Jams, Jars, Jugs, Juice, Ketchup, Leek, Lemon, Limes, Meat, Onions, Parsnips, Peanuts, Peppers, Pies, Pineapple, Preserve, Radishes, Rutabaga, Salami, Salsa, Sauce, Sausages, Shelving, Soda, Space, Squash, Tomato, Turnips, Venison, Water

Yesterday's Answer: Grape Leaves

Treasuries 24 through 42 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Nets Big 3 snap Clippers' winning streak

NEW YORK (AP)—Kyrie Irving scored a season-high 39 points, including eight straight in the fourth-quarter run that sent Brooklyn into the lead for good, and the Nets beat the Los Angeles Clippers 124-120 on Tuesday night.

Kevin Durant added 28 points, James Harden had 23 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds, and the three stars scored all the points in the decisive 13-0 spurt. The Nets held on from there to snap the Clippers' three-game winning streak.

Kawhi Leonard scored 33 points and Paul George had 26 for the Clippers, who entered with the NBA's best record and lost for just the second time in 12 games.

They had a five-point lead midway through the fourth before Durant hit a 3-pointer. Irving followed with one of his own, then made a basket and another 3. Harden finished off the spurt with a 3, making it 110-102 with 4:10 to play.

The Clippers got it down to one in the final seconds before Irving's free throws closed it out.

AP
Brooklyn Nets guard Kyrie Irving (11) shoots as Los Angeles Clippers guard Reggie Jackson (1) and center Ivica Zubac (40) watch during the second half of an NBA game, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, in New York.

Raptors 123, Magic 108

In Orlando, Fred VanVleet set a franchise record with 54 points and hit a career-best 11 3-pointers as Toronto beat the depleted Magic.

VanVleet made 11 of his first 12 attempts from 3-point range. He finished 17 of 23 from the field and 9 for 9 at the free throw line to surpass the previous Raptors record of 52 points scored by DeMar DeRozan against Milwaukee on Jan. 1, 2018.

The fifth-year guard out of Wichita State easily topped his previous high of 36 points set last season. VanVleet's previous best for 3s in a regular-season game was seven. He made eight in a playoff game last year against Brooklyn.

Once 2-8, the Raptors won for the seventh time in 11 games. They beat the reeling Magic for a second time in three nights and for the seventh consecutive time over the past three seasons.

Trail Blazers 132, Wizards 121

In Washington, Damian Lillard scored 32 points, Gary Trent Jr. added 26 while hitting seven 3-pointers and short-handed Portland held off the Wizards.

Enes Kanter had 14 points and 15 rebounds for the Trail Blazers, who improved to 2-2 on their six-game road trip.

Carmelo Anthony had 21 points off the bench and Robert Covington added 19 for the Blazers, who have been without starters CJ McCollum (foot), Jusuf Nurkic (wrist) and Derrick Jones Jr. (foot) for at least three games each.

Fill-in starter Nassir Little was also out Tuesday with a sprained left knee.

Russell Westbrook had a triple-double with 17 points, 12 rebounds and 10 assists for the Wizards, the only NBA team without five wins this season. Bradley Beal scored 37 points and Rui Hachimura added 24.

Pacers 134, Grizzlies 116

In Indianapolis, Domantas Sabonis had a season-best 32 points and 13 rebounds to help Indiana snap Memphis' seven-game winning streak.

Sabonis made 11 of his first 12 shots and had 24 points and 11 rebounds by halftime. It was his 14th double-double in 16 starts.

Malcolm Brogdon added 23 points and Myles Turner scored 22 for the Pacers, who set a season high for points.

The Grizzlies entered with the NBA's longest active win streak and ended up one victory shy of matching the franchise record of eight straight wins set four times, most recently in 2015.

Jazz 117, Pistons 105

In Salt Lake City, Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points to lead the Utah Jazz to a victory over the Detroit Pistons

Mike Conley added 20 points and Bojan Bogdanovic chipped in 18 for Utah, which reclaimed the NBA's best record with the Los Angeles Clippers loss to the Brooklyn Nets earlier on Tuesday. Royce O'Neale tallied 12 points and 13 rebounds.

The Jazz (16-5) won their ninth straight home game.

Jerami Grant scored 27 points to lead Detroit and Josh Jackson added 22. Mason Plumlee totaled 17 points and 14 rebounds for the Pistons.

Celtics 111, Warriors 107

In San Francisco, Jayson Tatum had 27 points in picking up the offensive slack for Boston without injured Marcus Smart, and the Celtics withstood another scoring outburst by Stephen Curry to beat the Golden State Warriors.

Curry scored 38 points with seven 3-pointers and joined late Hall of Famer Wilt Chamberlain as the only Warriors to score 17,000 points for the franchise.

Andrew Wiggins' layup with a minute to go for Golden State made it a three-point game, but Tatum converted a pair of free throws with 49.6 seconds left and Curry missed a contested 3 moments later.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	15	6	.714	0.0
Brooklyn	14	9	.609	2.0
Boston	11	8	.579	3.0
Toronto	9	12	.429	6.0
New York	9	13	.409	6.5
Central				
Milwaukee	12	8	.600	0.0
Indiana	12	9	.571	0.5
Cleveland	10	11	.476	2.5
Chicago	8	11	.421	3.5
Detroit	5	16	.238	7.5
Southeast				
Atlanta	10	10	.500	0.0
Charlotte	10	11	.476	0.5
Orlando	8	14	.364	3.0
Miami	7	13	.350	3.0
Washington	4	13	.235	4.0

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific	W	L	PCT	GB
LA Clippers	16	6	.727	0.0
LA Lakers	16	6	.727	0.0
Phoenix	11	8	.579	3.5
Golden State	11	10	.524	4.5
Sacramento	9	11	.450	6.0
Southwest				
Memphis	9	7	.563	0.0
Houston	10	9	.526	0.5
San Antonio	11	10	.524	0.5
Dallas	8	13	.381	3.5
New Orleans	7	12	.368	3.5
Northwest				
Utah	16	5	.762	0.0
Denver	12	8	.600	3.5
Portland	11	9	.550	4.5
Oklahoma City	8	11	.421	7.0
Minnesota	5	15	.250	10.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Japan extends emergency amid vaccine, Olympic uncertainty

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga announced Tuesday that he is extending a coronavirus state of emergency in Tokyo and nine other areas through March 7, amid growing uncertainty over the national rollout of vaccines and the hosting of the Tokyo Olympics this summer.

Suga said he will speed up vaccination plans and start inoculating a first group of medical workers in mid-February, instead of the earlier target of late February.

Under the state of emergency, the government has issued non-binding requests for people to avoid crowds and eating out in groups, and for restaurants and bars to close by 8 p.m.

New cases have declined in Tokyo and nationwide since early January, but experts say hospitals remain flooded with serious cases and that preventive measures should remain in place.

Japan has had about 400,000 coronavirus cases, including 5,800 deaths.

"I seek your cooperation to endure just a bit longer," Suga said. "We must make sure the infections are on a continuous decline." The emergency will be lifted before March 7 in areas with significant improvements in infections and their medical systems, he said.

The emergency will end Sunday as earlier planned in one prefecture, Tochigi north of Tokyo, where the situation has improved. It will remain in place in Tokyo and its neighbors Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa, as well as in Osaka, Kyoto, Hyogo and Fukuoka in the west and Aichi and Gifu in central Japan.

About 80% of the cases in Japan are in the 10 prefectures under the emergency and the area needs to be under a close watch, said health minister Norihisa Tamura said earlier Tuesday.

In addition to the request for bars and restaurants to close early, employers were asked to arrange for more of their staff to work from home. Additionally, the government will expand testing, officials said.

Unlike Japan's first emergency in April and May last year, schools, gyms, theaters and shops remain open, although some stores are voluntarily closing early.

He said the measures focus on narrow targets such as dining and service hours, in addition to basics such as mask wearing, handwashing and avoiding crowds.

Suga took office in September and pledged to get the economy back on track while keeping coronavirus infections under control. He says he is determined to hold the Tokyo Olympics this summer.

He has promised to secure enough vaccines to cover Japan's entire population of 127 million by June, but none has been approved yet.

Administrative Reform Minister Taro Kono, who is in charge of COVID-19 vaccines, raised concern Tuesday about the delayed distribution of European-made vaccines, saying Japan's preparations have been affected by a lack of EU clarity.

"Our vaccine supply schedule has not been finalized even now," Kono said.

Japanese officials have said they hope to launch inoculations with Pfizer vaccines, some of which are produced in the EU, starting with medical workers, then elderly people and others with underlying health conditions. The general public is not expected to receive vaccines until around June, and obtaining "herd immunity" ahead of the Olympics in July is considered unlikely, especially in a country known for vaccine skepticism.

Suga has faced criticism for delaying anti-virus actions until late December, when he finally suspended government-subsidized tourism and dining promotion campaigns. He was seen as too slow to act until local leaders pleaded for government leadership. The number of new daily infections and deaths roughly doubled over one month between November and December.

Support ratings for Suga's government have nosedived in recent polls which showed public dissatisfaction with his handling of the virus.

Chiefs rely heavily on late-round gems, too

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)— It was an easy decision for Daniel Sorensen to sign with the Kansas City Chiefs as an undrafted free agent.

They were really the only ones who wanted him.

Sorensen had just finished a standout career at BYU, but his game film and measurables went largely overlooked by the rest of the NFL. He wasn't too surprised when the 2014 draft came and went without his name getting called, but he was a little caught off guard when the phone rang following the seventh round and he heard the voice on the other end.

"Andy Reid was the only head coach that reached out to me," Sorensen recalled, "and that was pretty big. That was pretty remarkable to get a phone call from him. And he shot me straight: 'You have a good opportunity to make this team here.'"

Sorensen not only wound up making the team, he's stuck around for seven seasons, helping the Chiefs put together the best stretch in franchise history: They have won the past five AFC West titles, reached the conference championship game three consecutive years, and on Sunday will play the Tampa Bay Buccaneers for their second straight Super Bowl title.

AP

In this Sept. 20, 2020 file photo, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) huddles with his teammates before an NFL game against the Los Angeles Chargers in Inglewood, Calif.

Sorensen isn't an outlier, either.

While the Chiefs roster is undoubtedly top heavy—Patrick Mahomes is due a half-billion dollars over the next 10 years, and stars such as Tyreek Hill and Travis Kelce are rich beyond their wildest imaginations—they wouldn't be in this position if not for a collection of late-round draft picks and college free agents that are the envy of the league.

No fewer than 22 players drafted in the third round or later—or not all—are on the Chiefs roster as they finish their prep work for the Super Bowl. Ten of them are likely to start on offense, defense or special teams against the Buccaneers.

That doesn't include a handful of players with a similar backstory that reside on their practice squad.

"I think it goes along with the way this organization is run," Sorensen explained. "They pride themselves and we pride ourselves on our ability to trust the process, and the process has proven to be successful.

"They get guys that are willing to buy in, willing to practice, willing to put in the effort of watching the film and doing the little things right, and you've seen the careers of a lot of guys that have blossomed in this system."

At first glance, it shouldn't make sense. The Chiefs have won consistently for the better part of a decade, with a roster dotted by more stars than there are in the nighttime sky. There shouldn't be room for seemingly inferior talent.

Nor should players overlooked by every other NFL team in the draft, including those that have won far fewer games, jump at the opportunity to sign with Kansas City when it would appear to be a longshot to survive the cut.

Yet those are some of the reasons why guys such as linebacker Ben Niemann and defensive tackle Tershawn Wharton not only signed with the Chiefs but carved out important roles.

They are surrounded by some of the NFL's best players every time they step into the locker room, and that often forces them to raise their play to a level not even they thought possible.

They are welcomed by a group of players so confident and secure in their own ability that they are willing to pour into them whatever knowledge they can. And with Reid in control, they have a coach that has proven over several decades that he can get the best out of his players.

The result: Fourth-round draft pick L'Jarius Sneed was among the highest-rated cornerbacks in the league this season, and 2019 sixth-rounder Rashad Fenton has become indispensable alongside him and Sorensen in the defensive backfield.

When injuries popped up on the offensive line, the Chiefs plugged a big hole with Nick Allegretti, a seventh-round pick in 2019. They also added depth with Yasir Durant, an undrafted rookie capable of playing several positions.

"When they're looking for guys to add to our roster," Chiefs offensive line coach Andy Heck said, "they're looking for guys that love football, love to compete. Self-starters. That would be true on the offensive line. Guys that are extremely tough, guys that are able to move onto the next play, guys that are physically tough and rugged."

49ers' moves may not involve unseating Garoppolo

SAN FRANCISCO— The 49ers organization's public confidence in quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo makes it harder to determine how they may conduct themselves in an uncharacteristically active quarterback market.

While Deshaun Watson's trade request has put a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow and other veteran quarterbacks on teams looking to turn the page at that position, San Francisco's moves under center this year could be less dramatic than shipping out Garoppolo in favor of a new starter.

Head coach Kyle Shanahan in his season-ending press conference told reporters he believed Garoppolo was part of the team's core.

"Yes, I want Jimmy back in our core. Good thing he's not a free agent," Shanahan said.

That was in line with what he said after the team's Week 16 win over the Cardinals when asked about Garoppolo's future, saying he expected Garoppolo to be the starter, but the team wouldn't pass on an obvious upgrade.

"Now, you look into every avenue and you see if there's something out there that can get you a ton better it's the same answer for every position," Shanahan said in late December. "But look at Jimmy, look what he's done, look at where he's at with us financially and we better have a very good answer if you're going to find something better than that, because Jimmy's shown in one year that he's a guy who can take us to the Super Bowl and I also think Jimmy's going to get a lot better the more he plays."

It sounds like the 49ers are content rolling Garoppolo, keeping their draft picks and improving a roster that's due to lose a number of players in a year where the salary cap could become a hinderance in retaining key free agents. A Watson trade could throw a wrench into those plans, but let's assume for a moment that's not on the table.

Just because Garoppolo may return as the starter in 2021 doesn't mean there aren't quarterback moves to be made. San Francisco struggled last season when backups Nick Mullens and CJ Beathard played, and both are set to hit the free agent market in the offseason. Mullens is restricted, while Beathard is due for unrestricted free agency.

Shanahan was more open to the possibility of making changes at the backup quarterback spot for the first time since 2017.

"So, you have to look into everything when you're trying to fill out a quarterback roster," Shanahan said. "We have a starting quarterback, but in order to know where these guys are going to be, we've got to get either re-sign the guys we've got or see if we can upgrade them through the draft or free agency. In order to do that, you have to evaluate everything, so you know how to stack them and stuff. So, definitely will be looking at a lot more of that stuff this year than we did last year."

Carr to Pats, Watson to Raiders?

The New England Patriots' search for a new quarterback is underway. Could Derek Carr be a fit in Foxboro?

According to reports, the Las Vegas Raiders are open to trading their QB for draft picks they potentially could package in a deal for Watson.

"It could get to two first-round picks," one NFL insider said about what the Raiders could get for Carr. "He's not [Matthew] Stafford, but he's younger and he has a fair contract, so I could see two number ones."

The Patriots are among the teams mentioned in the story as possible suitors for Carr. The Chicago Bears, Indianapolis Colts, Washington Football Team, and New Orleans Saints also were listed.

The report was based on speculation rather than any legitimate Patriots interest in Carr. But if New England did decide to trade for the 29-year-old, it'd likely have to part ways with their No. 15 overall selection in the upcoming NFL Draft and their first-round pick next year. That's a pretty steep price.

The Pats are coming off a disappointing 7-9 campaign with Cam Newton under center. They missed the playoffs for the first time since 2008.

Bears interested in Winston

The Chicago Bears are in the market for a new quarterback this offseason. There have been rumors of different trades they could make, but if Deshaun Watson isn't available for them, could Jameis Winston be their option?

The chances of Winston coming to Chicago have to be slim, as Sean Payton has already said that Winston would be there to compete for the starting role when Drew Brees does retire. The belief is Brees will retire this offseason. If he does, the job has to be open for Winston, right?

It could be, but nothing is certain in the NFL. If Winston came to Chicago though, he would be plugged in as their starting quarterback. The Bears have rumored interest in the 27-year-old quarterback. They're among a couple of teams that could make a move for him. ***(AP/NBC)***

MLB work stoppage in 2022 increasingly likely

AP
Shown in this file photo is the Dodger Stadium located in the Elysian Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

NEW YORK (AP)—A work stoppage at the start of spring training 2022 seems increasingly likely after baseball players refused to negotiate with owners over a one-month delay for this spring training and regular season.

The breakdown Monday came after the sides were unable to reach a deal last June over the start of the pandemic-shortened 2021 season, although they did work out an opening-day agreement for expanded 2020 playoffs.

With the collective bargaining agreement set to expire Dec. 1, it is not hard to envision management instituting a lockout for baseball's first work stoppage since the 7 1/2-month strike that wiped out the 1994 World Series.

"I hope we don't have a work stoppage. I hope we are able to play," All-Star third baseman Nolan Arenado said Tuesday during his introductory news conference following his trade to St. Louis from Colorado. "I think both sides want to play, and especially with this 2020 season and it got delayed and all the things that are going on in the country, it probably wouldn't be very good if we had a stoppage."

Baseball had five strikes and three lockouts from 1972-95, losing 86 regular-season games at the start of the 1972 season, 713 during midseason in 1981 and 669 games during the final two months of 1994, a stoppage that cut 1995 schedules from 162 games per team to 144.

Whatever ability to work together that developed after the last stoppage has dissipated, largely because union head Tony Clark, his staff and players believe economics have tilted toward owners and clubs during the labor contracts agreed to in 2011 and 2016.

Those agreements saw luxury tax rates increase and restraints imposed on signing bonuses for amateurs, while among the objectives players gained included increases in minimum salaries, earlier offseason deadlines, a decease in team compensation for the loss of free agents and clubs assuming the cost of clubhouse food spreads.

Players have seethed in recent years over the way teams have delayed callups of rookie stars to delay eligibility for free agency and sometimes salary arbitration, while teams say it is their right to determine when players are ready for the major leagues.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred claims teams combined to lose $2.7 billion to $3 billion during the pandemic. Payrolls even before last year's regular-season without fans stayed in a historic narrow range of $4.24 billion in 2017, $4.23 billion in 2018 and $4.22 billion in 2019, then dropped to $1.75 billion last year, when players received 37% of salaries due to the 60-game schedule.

Players view club large-scale rebuilding as tanking. Both sides are troubled by regular-season attendance that dropped from 73.76 million in 2016 to 68.49 million in 2019.

Scott Boras, who negotiated more than $1.2 billion in contracts during the 2019-20 offseason, says the losses will contribute toward an agreement next offseason. Boras is the sport's most influential agent, with clients Zack Britton, Gerrit Cole, James Paxton and Max Scherzer filling four of the eight seats on the union's executive subcommittee, which also includes Jason Castro, Francisco Lindor, Andrew Miller and Marcus Semien.

CAMACHO

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Coalition. Camacho, who successfully won his battle with the COVID-19 virus and is getting ready for his next Ultimate Fighting Championship call, added that they may also set up donation stations on the day of the challenge and announcements will be made later.

The 31-year-old said his 24-hour run/walk will start at 10am on Feb. 12 at the southern part of Guam or at the Merizo Pier all the way to the norther end in Ritidian Point and if he still has time, he will also pass through Marine Drive. Camacho will not bring food or any form of hydration in the duration of the challenge and if he needs to take a rest, he can't do it indoor. He would be depending on the people he will meet along the way to have something to eat or drink to survive the challenge for one day.

"It's really like emulating how it's like to be homeless, being out there the whole time," said Camacho, adding that he decided to launch this awareness campaign after hearing a story (from an interview) of an army veteran who became homeless.

"Even me, I don't have a real idea of the extent of homelessness problem on island. I am one of those who had misconception about homeless people, their struggles. There's a lot of factors why they ended up being homeless and it's not by choice. Some lost their jobs, others are victims of domestic violence, while there are people who are suffering from PTSD and other mental health issues," Camacho said.

Besides helping spread awareness on homelessness and finding a way to help homeless people, Camacho also has a personal stake on this challenge.

"I am not a runner. I am an MMA fighter, I fight for a living, so I would like to see how I can hold on to this 24-hour challenge. I know my body can only hold so much, but my mind can do better. This will be one of the hardest things I will do in my life," said Camacho, whose single longest run before was 10 miles.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho will be taking on a challenge off the octagon cage on Feb. 12.

GROVES

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Meanwhile, 19 MGA members battled for the January Ace at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort, including junior golfer Joshua Atalig, who scored a net 81 in his debut with the club. Other participants in the Jan. 30 tournament were John Terlaje (net 72), Joel Dela Cruz (72), Carl Hocog (73), Dung Tenorio (74), Dennis Mendiola (75), Mel Sablan (75), Joe "Kamikaze" Camacho (78), Marco Peter (78), J.J. Atalig (80), Gerald Guerrero (80), Sebastian Camacho (84), Patrick George (84), Steve Aguon (86), and Yamagishi (88).

From Laolao, MGA players will head to the newly reopened Coral Ocean Resort for the February Ace Tournament on Feb. 21.

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Chiefs rely heavily on late-round gems, too

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'Homeless' Camacho takes on new challeng

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In this file photo, Frank "The Crank" Camacho, fifth left back row, joins fellow MMA fighters for a group photo after a training run in California.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

In this file photo, Frank "The Crank" Camacho trains in California before his fight. Camacho is on break from MMA fight and will be taking on a new challenge to raise awareness on homelessness.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Marianas warrior Frank "The Crank" Camacho is taking on another challenge off the octagon cage, as he will be running/walking around the villages in Guam in 24 hours to raise awareness about homelessness on the island.

"I don't have a million dollar to give to people, but I have two strong feet and a healthy body and mind that will do this challenge to educate us how homelessness has become a serious problem on Guam and how we can help people who are in this difficult situation," said Camacho.

As the MMA fighter prepares for the challenge, he is encouraging people to send donations to GuamTime.net and 100% of the proceeds will go to The Guam Homeless

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Marianas Golf Association January ace winner Chris Groves is flanked by runner-up Isaac Aguon, right, and third placer Keoni Chariton during the awards ceremony for the Jan. 30 tournament at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

Groves noses out Aguon for MGA January Ace

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Chris Groves grabbed one of the last four monthly ace awards in the 2020-2021 season of the Marianas Golf Association after prevailing in the January tournament held on the west course of the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

The 9-handicapper recorded a 40 on the front nines and 37 on the back for a gross 77 and net 68. Groves matched the net score of Isaac Aguon, but the former won the tiebreak and the first place honors via the scorecard playoff, 35.5-37.5 (players handicap divided by 2 and subtracted from scores on the front nine). Aguon, a 21-handicapper, also earned a net 68 following his 48 in the first nines holes and 41 in the last for a gross 89.

Joining Groves and Aguon in the Top 3 was Keoni Chariton, who was just one stroke behind the two tied golfers. The 16-handicapper Chariton fired a 45 and 40 on the front and back nines, respectively, for a gross 85 and net 69.

With Groves winning the January Ace, he will play in the club championship, joining Ron Benavente (May Ace), Chris Leon Guerrero (June), Don Hallmark (July), Joey Dela Cruz (August), John Sablan (September), Calvin Yamagishi (October), Patrick Guerrero (November), and Shine Tenorio. MGA will only need the winners of the February, March, and April events to complete the club championship cast.

Beside taking a seat in MGA's season-ending tournament, Groves also won closest to the pin honors on the par-3, 148-yard No. 13. Other closest to the pin winners in par-3 holes were Jerome Sablan on the 173-yard No. 3; J.J. Atalig on the 155-yard No. 7; and Mel Sablan on the 137-yard

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